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Manifest Destiny, 1947

BY FREDA KIRCHWEY

THE purpose of Mr. Truman's message to Congress was so simple and obvious that it should have been universally understood. The conflicting interpretations applied to it in this country and in Europe reflect only the confusion of a public which has yet to realize that the United States, as the greatest industrial and military power in the world, *is going to support its rapidly expanding interests in every continent.* No talk about the United Nations will deflect it from that purpose. No scruples about intervention or imperialism. No further dependence on Britain. It may make strategic and diplomatic mistakes; it may move uncertainly, since the implications of overwhelming power are still new to it and run counter to old, established attitudes. Its course of action is not fixed—the contradictions between the policy announced for Greece and Turkey and the policy being pursued in China are apparent—but the objectives and general outline of its policy are now clear. President Monroe's hands-off doctrine has been expanded by President Truman to encompass the globe.

It would be foolish to waste much indignation on the language of the President's message: his unctuous reference to Greek "freedom" and "integrity" and the "necessity of helping free peoples to maintain their free institutions"—as embodied in the noisome, brutal oligarchies ruling Greece and Turkey. All governments are hypocrites and questionable policies are packaged to please the eye of the guileless, moral beholder. It is useful to expose this particular deception only in order to bring to bear as much pressure as possible in defense of the people of those countries, especially of Greece; and to illumine the real and specific intentions behind the President's verbal camouflage.

Put baldly, Mr. Truman's message was a plain declaration of political war against Russia. Nothing more, but also nothing less. Under his plan, American money and arms would be employed simultaneously to establish economic stability and crush rebellion in Greece, thus accomplishing what Britain has failed to accomplish and ending the danger of a Communist-controlled government linked with similar governments in the other Slavic states. By this maneuver the President thinks he can prevent a political "chain reaction" which would engulf Turkey and open the whole Near and Middle East to Soviet domination.

The idea might be feasible, however unappetizing, if the premises were what the Administration apparently believes them to be. But the new strategy, as Mr. Truman outlined it, is based on a series of false assumptions about the situation in Eastern Europe.

What Mr. Truman charges is that the guerrilla forces fighting in the mountains of northern Greece and their political sympathizers in the population are actually nothing more than Russian-inspired terrorists who must be crushed by force of arms (American arms) lest a "totalitarian" regime be imposed upon the Greek people. Whether the guerrillas have received help—or if so, to what extent—from across the borders, the President obviously does not know, since he sprang his drastic program on the world without waiting for the findings of the United Nations commission now investigating the disturbances in northern Greece. But one thing is dead sure without any new evidence: the Greek guerrillas have received far less help from any source than the government's army has received from the British; and still they fight on. They fight, not because Russia orders them to, but because they have the backing of a large part of the Greek people who have suffered beyond endurance at the hands of right-wing irregulars and soldiers, armed and trained by the British. Terror has been practiced on both sides in Greece, but by ignoring the terror of the right Mr. Truman betrayed a shocking indifference to the human and political realities of the Greek struggle. And he demonstrated his faulty understanding of the situation all over Eastern Europe.

The truth is, Russia's influence in the Balkans rises from two things: first, from the fact that the Red Army defeated the Germans and then occupied the area; and, second, from the more basic fact that those countries, ripe for change long before 1939, emerged from the horror of occupation and civil war and economic collapse with no practical alternative to revolution. The necessary and inevitable overturn in no way threatened Moscow's long-range interests. On the contrary, the Soviet

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Union backed revolution in the Balkans for national as well as for ideological reasons. Neighboring countries with Communist-controlled governments have provided a security belt, a strategic bulwark against possible future attack and a defense against the pressure of Western economic interests. While the Western powers have done their best to stifle social change, Russia could capitalize upon it; a vast advantage in fighting a political war.

No criticism of Moscow's methods in the Balkans, however justified, can alter these fundamentals. American officials may demand the institution of democratic processes and denounce one-party states, but if they continue to ignore—as they have constantly done in the past—the indigenous character of the revolutions in those countries, the Truman doctrine will fail miserably, as the Churchill doctrine has failed, in Greece.

For Greece is also a nation in revolution; and in spite of the active leadership of Communists in the resistance forces, that revolution was not made in Moscow. That it may be exploited by Moscow for Russia's larger strategic ends can hardly be questioned. What must be denied is the assumption, Mr. Truman's major false assumption, that Russian ambitions can be blocked by propping up the Greek government in the name of "democracy," or by crushing the guerrillas in the name of "freedom from outside pressure" and coercion.

Defenders of the new doctrine will argue that we are not interested in any *special* government in Greece; we are interested only in restoring order and stability by lifting the shattered country out of chaos and by helping the government—any legally constituted government—to put down rebellion. But this statement leaves the real issue untouched. Rebuilding Greece to at least the low economic level that existed in the years before the war would ease the suffering of the people; and it should be undertaken without delay. It might, if successful, reduce political tension and moderate the rigors of revolution. Why this necessary task should be undertaken by the United States in solitary munificence is another question, and must be dealt with separately. The point I want to make here, in response to the apologists for the Truman doctrine, is that stabilizing an economic system that needs to be rooted out and strengthening a government that needs to be overthrown—or at least invited to resign—are not going to provide a lasting substitute for thoroughgoing social change. They will not solve the problem of a poor country which has been subjected for years to a succession of grasping, inefficient governments, ranging from fascist dictatorship to corrupt oligarchy, interested above all else in dragging the last penny of tribute out of the people in order to maintain a small and lavishly ornate aristocratic society. France was not more fatally poised for revolution in 1789, or Russia in 1917.

That no comparable change occurred in Greece in 1944 was the responsibility of the Churchill gov-

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ernment. It will be repeated in the days ahead. Sane Americans must ask themselves whether they want to continue the Churchill policy, however embellished with up-to-date American technology and lend-lease arms. They must ask themselves whether they really want to fight the political war Mr. Truman has declared. It is a war we cannot win, and Russia knows it. The editorials in *Pravda and Izvestia* are convincing evidence that Moscow regards the new American doctrine with resentment but not with alarm. The Russians know we do not intend to fight them with arms, and they will be sure they can turn our proposed intervention into a propaganda weapon against us.

The President's brusque dismissal of the United Nations as an agency through which relief and rehabilitation could be brought to Greece was alone sufficient to expose the political nature of his program.

Last October the Food and Agricultural Organization of the U. N. completed a remarkable study of the economic situation in Greece and the measures necessary to bring about an improvement. The full report, which has just been made available, describes the desperate poverty of Greece, the breakdown of its civil service, and the antiquated system of taxation that accentuates the violent extremes of wealth and misery in the country. The recommendations of the commission are very concrete and should be studied by every Congressman and Senator before the hearings on the President's program begin. The F. A. O. proposes the creation of a special United Nations Mission, superseding all other bodies, to operate the program of reconstruction and development. How the work should be done is set down in detail. Financial estimates are included: loans totaling $100,000,000 as a start. And minimum reforms to be carried through by the Greek government are proposed as prerequisites to the whole program. Significantly, the commission advises that military expenditures be sharply scaled down; evidently it did not contemplate war to the death with the guerrillas.

The F. A. O. report is so sound and humane, and so practical in its recommendations, that its publication at this time will, I think, prove an embarrassment to the Administration. It provides for everything Mr. Truman demanded except political war. If it does not go far enough to settle the civil struggle in Greece, it at least promises amelioration. And, by explaining exactly how the machinery of the United Nations can be used to carry out a large-scale program, it dramatizes the President's insistence on unilateral action.

The Administration may discover that a plan like this appeals to large elements of the public, and to members of Congress, who have no stomach for new and grandiose adventures in power politics. The people have been urged to believe that the interests of the United States are tied to the success of the United Nations. They may well decide that they prefer the proposals of the F. A. O. to the proposals of Mr. Truman. They may reject the idea of defending those interests by engaging in political war with Soviet Russia.

Had Enough?

IT IS too early to tell whether the voters have already "had enough" of the Republicans, though Dr. Gallup indicates that they have, but after two short months the Republicans in Congress behave as if they had had too much of each other. Not even the Democratic Party of the latter-day New Deal, suffering the sting of daily collusion between its Southern wing and the Republican enemy, was so noisily at war with itself as the G. O. P. today. What is more, the Democratic cleavage at least made sense ideologically, whereas the current Republican squabbling is in large part merely the consequence of personal rivalries sparked by Presidential ambitions. The Democrats suffered from having conflicting programs; the Republicans from having no program at all.

One need not, of course, accept the word of the Democratic National Committee that the Republicans, having "sowed the hot air of empty promises," are now left to "reap the burning whirlwind of national problems unsolved." G. O. P. leaders themselves put the matter less figuratively. From the extreme right comes the querulous voice of Senator Bushfield of South Dakota: "The leaders of Congress are in confusion among themselves and have not agreed upon any major legislation which we had promised. . . . Putting it bluntly, we have failed in everything which we promised the voters." And Senator Jenner, representing the ultra-conservative Indiana machine that ran over Charles La Follette, has served notice "on my distinguished colleagues on both sides of the aisle that, as a freshman Senator, I am disgusted."

Sniping from a middle position, young Senator Lodge of Massachusetts has admonished his colleagues that the people "did not intend that in voting Republican they were voting for reaction." And Senator Baldwin of Connecticut, on behalf of sixteen Senate "freshmen" (aged thirty-eight to sixty-seven), recently addressed a round-robin letter to Republican leaders protesting the brush-off the newcomers have received at the hands of the Senate Big Four.

On what passes for the left in the G. O. P., scarcely a trace of party discipline remains. Senator Morse, who keeps his party franchise only by campaigning indiscriminately for Republicans at election time, last week let loose a blast at his esteemed National Committee chairman for having demanded "team play." "If his party leaders have their way," said Mr. Morse, "they will lead this country to a laissez faire economy which rests on the principle of the exploitation of human

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beings for profit." Similarly acid observations came from Senators Aiken and Tobey.

On the floor of both houses we have the spectacle of Republican against Republican on every major issue that has come before the Congress. The party is split from top to bottom on which should have the right of way, tax reduction or payment on the national debt, with Representative Knutson's proposed 20 per cent tax cut due for a bitter intra-party free-for-all. The Lilienthal appointment has sharply divided Taft and Vandenberg, along with their respective followers, without in the least closing the breach between Taft and Bricker, even though both are opposed to the appointment. Bricker went out of his way to dissociate himself from the precise Taft line of attack on Lilienthal and has yet to renounce his Presidential ambitions in favor of his fellow-Ohioan, as predicted. Vandenberg has ranged his followers against those party colleagues who are bent on wiping out the reciprocal trade program, and House G. O. P. leaders are grumbling against their opposite numbers in the Senate for soft-pedaling the labor issue. And now the President's speech on Greece, it may be assumed, will add to all this fragmentation by opposing those Republicans whose Russophobia transcends their isolationism to those who take their isolationism straight.

To Mark Sullivan, all this sound and fury merely indicates that "crystallization" is in progress. To a less charitable eye it appears that the Republicans, having built their house in the hot haste of an election campaign, are now trying vainly to agree on a foundation.

The Shape of Things

WINSTON CHURCHILL'S ONSLAUGHT against the Labor government's economic policies has been described by reporters present as one of his most brilliant efforts. Viewed in cold print, however, his speech seems to be more colorful than constructive. The fact is that he and the party he leads have no program of their own and are unable even to follow a consistent line of criticism. For months they have been accusing the government of imposing an unnecessary degree of "austerity" on the country; now the coal crisis has forced them to take the opposite tack and denounce ministerial failure to restrict fuel consumption at the beginning of the winter. Even on foreign policy Mr. Churchill attempts to ride horses galloping in opposite directions. He damns the government for wasting man-power by staying in Palestine and then blasts it for getting out of India, where British rule could only be sustained by a much greater expenditure. It will take more than speeches of this kind, however glittering their phraseology, to shake the government's position. More damaging are the criticisms to which it has been subjected inside the government party. Labor members have charged, with some truth, that the Cabinet has many plans but no coordinated plan and that it has been timid about taking the country into its confidence. Undoubtedly, the fuel crisis has diminished the prestige of Mr. Attlee's team, but it has also given that team a new chance, for it has shocked Britons into fuller realization of the magnitude of the problems they are facing. Now that they know the worst, the British people are likely to respond to this challenge as vigorously as they have responded to other challenges to their existence.

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FIVE JUSTICES OF THE SUPREME COURT, WITH the supposedly conservative Justice Jackson as spokesman, have decided that the Wagner act gives collective-bargaining rights to unions of foremen. The other four, led by the allegedly left-wing Justice Douglas, contest this view, holding that foremen are part of management. It seems to us that the views of the majority rather than of the minority correspond to the letter and spirit of the Wagner act, and certainly they show a greater understanding of the facts of industrial life. In his dissenting opinion, Justice Douglas asserted that the decision of his five colleagues tended not only "to obliterate the line between management and labor" but "to emphasize that the basic opposing forces in industry are not management and labor but the operating group on the one hand and the stockholder and bondholder group on the other." From this statement he proceeds to the *reductio ad absurdum* argument that if foremen are "employees" with the right of collective bargaining, so are vice-presidents. We think it would be truer to say that the growing atomization of corporate ownership and its divorce from management theoretically put top executives in the position of "hired men" but actually make them independent of ownership. Real power in an increasing number of large corporations is concentrated in the hands of management groups, which tend to become self-supporting and self-perpetuating, with interests differing from those of both workers and stockholders. In any case, there is a clear line to be drawn between these policy-making officials and foremen; the latter may be the non-commissioned officers of the industrial army, but, as in the real army, their status is that of enlisted men.

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SHOULD PUBLIC EMPLOYEES BE DENIED THE right to strike under all circumstances? It may be easy to answer that question in a totalitarian state, but in a democracy, we submit, no blanket rule is admissible. We may agree that it is a right which guardians of the public safety, such as policemen and firemen, may have to forego, but if they are forbidden to strike they should be protected by a guaranty of better-than-going wage rates and stringent bargaining and arbitration provisions. In the

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case of teachers and most other public employees, we believe that, under the present circumstances of employment, they should be free to strike when they have exhausted all other means of persuading the authorities to consider their grievances. The Republican majority in the New York Legislature, however, not content with a general ban against strikes in the civil-service law of the state, has jammed through without hearings a bill imposing harsh penalties on public employees who collectively walk off the job. Such strikers, the bill declares, must be instantly dismissed from the service and reinstated only on condition (a) that their pay shall for three years be not greater than it was before dismissal, and (b) that for a five-year period they shall be treated as on probation and without tenure. This bill now goes to Governor Dewey, and as he is generally credited not only with promoting it but with insisting on amendments increasing its severity, there seems little doubt that it will receive his signature. The crying need of the public service, however, locally and nationally, is not more curbs of this nature but remedies for conditions that tend to exclude from it people of ability and character.

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IF THE COMMUNISTS ARE AS DIABOLICAL AS they are reputed to be, they will send delegations to Washington to lobby for the mess of crackpot legislation that has been introduced to outlaw them. Some of the proposed bills we have noted would leave the comrades free to pursue their disruptive way, enhanced by martyrdom and bothered only to the extent of having to convert themselves into some such thing as an American Workers' Progressive Labor Party, with an avowed program no more dangerous than the Elks. Others of these bills might indeed choke off the Communists, but they too have a flaw: they would choke off the rest of us as well—maybe even Rankin himself. His bill, for example, provides ten years in jail for anyone who "conveys the impression of sympathy with or approval of communism or Communist ideology" either in the classroom, in private letters, or in print. To many potential jurors in this country, public power is pretty pink, and it was Rankin—then known as "Cheap Juice John"—who fathered the TVA in the House. Then there is the Hobbs bill, which would jail a government official for recommending or approving a person who turned out to be "subversive"—a term that embraces "conduct . . . inimical to the government of the United States or the tendency of which is to impede" any of its projects. Like the OPA, for instance? There would not be jails enough to hold all the Republicans who worked to undermine the New Deal. These farces need not be taken seriously as long as we have free elections and a Supreme Court, but Secretary of Labor Schwellenbach's call for a legal ban on the Communists is genuinely disturbing. A man of sobriety and usually good judgment, he should know that such blunderbuss treatment would hit only the innocents, while, as our "subversive" contemporary, the *Wall Street Journal*, points out, the Communists themselves would "flourish like the green bay tree."

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WHILE IT IS WRITTEN FROM A CONSERVATIVE standpoint and contains a number of serious omissions, the A. F. of L. delegation's report on trade-union conditions in Argentina should be studied by everyone concerned with Latin American affairs. The delegation finds that the General Confederation of Labor is now completely subordinated to the Perón government and that it has neither the power to elect its officers nor to make its own policies. The Argentine Department of Labor has itself become a union organizer, employing means that are familiar enough in the labor history of fascist states. Resisting officials are arrested, dismissed fom their posts, or, as in the case of the former general secretary, Señor Gay, simply spirited away. Strikes, wage demands, and organizational plans are all dictated by cliques responsive to the government's direction. At the same time, Perón is carrying on a campaign against the unions outside the new Labor Front. It is true, the A. F. of L. delegates declare, that for the time being labor derives certain advantages from its forced alliance. In many industries wages have been raised by a nominal 25 per cent. Long overdue social legislation has been enacted. Perhaps because the delegates have sought to avoid the charge of political intervention, there is no mention of the important fact that wage increases pass through the hands of Perón's Ministry of Labor. Nor is it pointed out that while millions of pesos have been amassed in the old-age-pension fund, very little has been received by the beneficiaries.

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HOW LONG WILL PERON'S PATERNALISM continue? At present, the army and the ranching and land-owning classes, whose interests and traditions are paramount with the government, have their own feuds with the manufacturers and with the navy, and therefore find it expedient to play up to labor. But what will happen when the strategy changes? The great likelihood is that the Argentine workers will discover, as others have done, that eventual losses will far outweigh present gains. Labor may find that it has become the tool of that expansionist nationalism which dominates the minds of the army leaders and of Perón himself. So much is suggested by the reply made to the A. F. of L. charges by the present federation secretary, Aurelio Hernandez, himself a Ministry of Labor nominee imposed upon the unions by intimidation. According to the Labor Front boss, the A. F. of L. report is merely intended to support Spruille Braden's "imperialist policies." This absurd accusation is clearly intended to win popular support for Perón's rearmament campaign.

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Two Worlds in Moscow

BY ALEXANDER WERTH

Moscow, March 15 (by Cable)

AT THE end of the first week of the conference Moscow has an uncomfortable feeling that the discordant squawking of the Ministers' quartet is not half so important as the brass-band accompaniment coming out of Washington. Many Americans are happy about Mr. Truman's speech, but the Russians are acutely upset, as was to be expected; while the British, including even Bevin, are scratching their heads and the French are holding theirs in their hands. People are asking what it all means, right in the midst of the conference. What is the significance of the peculiar timing? Even assuming Greece is "a very special case," why is Turkey's independence regarded as threatened when, in reality, the Russians have been laying off Turkey for the last few months more than ever before? Russia and the Black Sea powers clearly have a case where the Dardanelles are concerned. Why prop up the Turks to such an extent that they will hardly be in a mood to discuss reasonable proposals for revising the Montreux treaty?

But what is worrying the Russians, British, and French in varying degrees is not Greece and Turkey so much as those more general considerations in Truman's speech which are already being described as "the new American foreign policy." Two sets of reactions can be noted. On the American side in conference quarters you hear it said, "The Russians have been asking for it. They've done nothing but snipe at us in their propaganda, insult us as fascists and imperialists, and we've had enough." The Russians, of course, have promptly compared Truman to Hitler, and said he was trying to revive the anti-Comintern pact and the idea of a *cordon sanitaire* against Russia. Stung by the sharpness of his comments on totalitarian influences in Rumania, Bulgaria, and Poland, they also comment, "He says all this allegedly in defense of the highest principles of pure democracy as he understands it, but he doesn't say one word against totalitarian regimes such as Spain and Argentina. In other words, the right-wing totalitarian regimes are quite O. K. but anything that he chooses to call a totalitarian left-wing regime is anathema. And anyway, what sort of democracies are Greece and Turkey—it's enough to make a cat laugh!"

Whether one takes seriously or not the talk of American imperialism—though the military implications of the loan to Turkey are pretty obvious—the question inevitably aroused in every mind is whether we are going to have one world or two. Is it to be Russia and its "victims" on one side and America and all the rest of decent humanity on the other? But many of the French and British here feel this is just the question Truman did not care to analyze carefully. For isn't there rather a crude identification in the speech between "democracy" and "the American way of life"? There is a third group of humanity which rejects communism but equally rejects the American way of life. Did Truman overlook Socialist England? Did he forget France, at least half of which is either Socialist or Communist? Moreover, in Europe several sets of ideas and ideologies are in conflict, and to say, "You've got to choose between the Soviet way of life and the American way of life," is considered a crude oversimplification of the mental processes of the people of the Continent. If that is the case in Europe, how much more complicated are the problems of human conduct and aspirations in the immense areas of Asia and Africa! Why, even in terms of "pure democracy," is Chiang Kai-shek's China so much worthier an object than Red China, which at least has certain standards of efficiency, discipline, honesty, and human decency that corrupt Kuomintang China lacks?

Such are some of the general considerations one hears on the fringes of the Moscow conference, where, it must be said, these fundamental issues are being talked about much more than at the Foreign Ministers' meetings proper, with their dreary mudslinging contests between Molotov and Bevin—one denouncing the state of affairs in the British zone of Germany, the other in the Soviet zone. Who cares? In all fairness to Bevin, he did not start it, and it is not clear what practical purpose, except filling the air and the Russian newspapers with his speeches, Molotov is hoping to achieve by cataloguing all the shortcomings of the British in their zone. For so far as foreign opinion is concerned, he knows that Bevin in the next hour will throw an equally heavy packet of the Control Council's reports at his head.

Bevin no doubt made a useful point when he said denazification was such an immensely difficult problem that there were inevitable shortcomings in all four zones. But is denazification today the real problem? Are there not much more serious features of the German situation to worry people in Moscow today? Truman alluded to the existence of two worlds, and are there not in fact already two Germanys? The Russians have been clamoring for "German economic unity." The British and the

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Americans are saying that economic unity was originally prevented by the Russians when they were unwilling to ship food from eastern to western Germany, which led western Germany in turn to suspend the delivery of reparations to Russia. Now, with the large liquidation of German industry in the eastern zone—what there was of it—would not the economic unity of Germany be a liability to Britain and America unless the Russians "put money into it," that is, unless they at least provided their zone with adequate equipment for intensive food-growing?

So there is clearly no hurry on the part of the Western powers to establish German economic unity or scrap the industries in their zones. Nor is there much desire for political unity, for that matter. The Russians have been asking that the democratic political parties—by which they mean in the first place the Socialist Unity Party—and the trade unions be allowed to have their all-German congresses and their central organs or newspapers. But the feeling among the Western powers against centralization remains strong.

Many of the French are completely cynical about the whole thing. This is the sort of talk one hears in French quarters: Of course England has no intention of scrapping the bulk of the Ruhr industries. Western Germany has got to become a prosperity area in Europe whether the Russians like it or not. It is too bad if foul people like the Germans have the benefit of living in the prosperity zone, but western Germany is essential to the whole economy of Western Europe—England, France, Belgium, Holland. Such, say the French, is the American point of view. According to the French speaker's taste he adds or does not add a discourse on the American monopoly capitalist's interest in western Germany and trots out or does not trot out stories about sinister American links with German capitalist trusts, cartels, and monopolies. Some declare frankly that Germany will be the industrial spearhead against Russia; others simply say that it will be the citadel of Western Europe's prosperity. Many Frenchmen add, "We don't like it, but France and England are poor, miserable countries and, in the end, we will do just as the Americans tell us, whether we like it or not." Such cynicism is not in the British nature, and one hears much talk from Englishmen here about German Social Democrats doing this and that and about the nationalization of western Germany's industries, and so on. But anyway, it is a far cry from Morgenthau's ruralization of western Germany.

By the time this appears in print we may have some clearer ideas on what is likely to be achieved by the Foreign Ministers' conference. A study of the Control Council's report, with mutual recriminations, will take several more days, and one can only join in Bidault's prayer that agreement on a whole group of proposals at the end of the discussions will be easier than agreement on the proposals one by one. A view authoritatively expressed in British quarters is that this is not Versailles, where the victorious powers produced a set of ready-made solutions. Germany is today the sick man of Europe, and the whole process of treaty-making must be very different from what it was in 1919. The German treaty will, in fact, be only the registration of a certain status quo which will emerge after a long process of implementing instructions to the Control Council.

A further profound complication arises from the question—linked with the whole problem of when, if ever, there will be a central German government—whether it is to be called a treaty *with* Germany or a treaty *for* Germany. The American compromise proposal for calling it simply "the German treaty" will probably be challenged by Molotov; already the Russian press is asking whether it will be a treaty or a *diktat*—obviously an important political question.

The only forecast about the outcome of the conference now possible is that a large number of new instructions will be sent to the Control Council and that the draft of a peace treaty with Austria may be more or less completed, though even that is uncertain.

In one matter the Russians appear to be sadly disappointed. The phrase "Anglo-Americans" is beginning to reappear with growing frequency. Their great hope, as I wrote last week, was that England might follow an "independent policy." So far there is not much evidence of this. In British quarters some are saying, "How can there be when we simply must get another loan from America?" Others remark, "Bevin is in a very sticky spot. The Truman speech is sure to increase the opposition to America's and Bevin's policy—if it remains the same policy—and unless Bevin brings back from Moscow a new alliance with Russia there'll be hell to pay inside the Labor Party." And there is an acutely uncomfortable feeling among many British that if Truman's two-worlds policy is pursued, the consequences may be extremely serious. It might even mean the collapse of the United Nations and an increased danger of war—war in which England might be the chief victim.

There is another aspect to the whole thing. Will Truman's speech help the difficult and slow settling-down process in some parts of Europe, a process which begins to be observable in some countries—in Poland, for instance? The Polish government has undoubtedly achieved much in the way of economic restoration and has not been excessively interfered with in its work by a truculent and belligerent opposition. Isn't there a danger, it is asked, of this opposition becoming more active now and retarding economic restoration? Would this really benefit the Polish people as a whole?

There is another danger. The Russians are today

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economically weak and suffering from a variety of post-war difficulties, and they feel that America is cashing in on these temporary weaknesses. This is creating a feeling of anger and resentment in the bulk of the people. It is a psychological factor which should not be overlooked. Russia in isolation may become a more disturbing factor in the world's thinking than Russia even superficially "cooperating" with the West. We saw it playing such a role during various periods between the two wars.

Dixie in Black and White

BY A. G. MEZERIK

I

Chapel Hill, North Carolina

ALONE of the regions in the United States the South has a tradition of a hereditary aristocracy, of landed bourbons. Their philosophy, molded by generations of slave-holding, has been contemptuous of those who work in trade, industry, or the learned professions. These bourbons were and are the great resisters of change, the strong defenders of their yesterdays.

The virtues and vices of the Southern bourbons are not confined to their class but have set a stamp on the whole society. The South has glorified physical prowess and adventure, the exploits of the hunter, the pomp and courage of the military man. It has nourished a strangely distorted code of chivalry which expresses itself even now in duels, fights, and horsewhippings. It exalts sportsmanship and gives a high place to horse-racing, cock-fighting, and feuding.

The legacies of the plantation mind are apparent to this day in the opposition to progress in education, health, industrialization, unionization, and religious practices. Religion has felt this hand of the past very heavily, perhaps because spiritual aspirations are conditioned by other goals. The South has always had the largest percentage of church members of any section in the country; it has, in fact, been derisively called the "Bible belt." The God of the Southern Protestant churches has been, much more than in any other region, a personal God, watching over the individual, assuming responsibility for his luck or misfortune, supporting him in his fights and feuds. The aim of the church has been the good individual rather than the good society.

This is the setting in which the South has matured. There have been some changes, but until recently they have lagged far behind the needs of the people. The great crisis of 1930 ushered in a violent awakening. And with the advent of Roosevelt in 1933, factors which would begin the transformation of the social, political, and economic status of the South came into being. The waste of land was slowed by programs to correct soil erosion. The farmer, accustomed to thinking of himself as a lone individual who had no interest in a society bigger than his family clan, found that a nation was interested in his welfare. Without markets for his produce, with hunger penetrating his kitchen, the farmer awoke to the meaning, in his own life, of government purchases of his crop at prices far above the open market. His brother in the villages and the towns found that in work relief, PWA and WPA, society was showing an interest in him too, and he reciprocated that interest. Farmer and townsman began to think about their government, to go to the polls, and to look around at the bigger world.

Farm Security brought the first freedom from the fear that a man might work hard to create a home and a farm and lose his all to a bad crop—and it would be no one's business, for in the bourbon ideology, no one cared. Social Security erased a few of the lines in Southern faces with the hint that old age might not be the years of the unwanted they had always been. Laws on minimum wages and maximum hours brought a tiny surcease from the never-ending struggle to earn a bare living and to get some resting time that wasn't also worry time. And the TVA was being built, providing work and a new way of life for a region.

The towns which dot this rolling countryside are lovely. Raleigh, Durham, Charlotte, and Greensboro have a warm ingratiating quality which seems to insure ease of living. There is a pervasive feeling that things move slowly, that the even tenor of old ways could not easily be disturbed. Yet the old is giving way to the new.

On a sunny, cool morning of November, in the beautiful mountain resort of Asheville, the North Carolina Baptist Convention was holding its 116th annual meeting. The "messengers," as the delegates from the local churches are called, listened to the report of the Committee on Social Service and Civic Righteousness.

A. G. MEZERIK, author of "The Revolt of the South and West," has spent the past several months making a new survey of the South. This is the first of a series of articles on current social and economic trends.

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The committee made recommendations, and the chair asked for a vote. The report was unanimously adopted.

The Baptists, the religious denomination to which Bilbo and Talmadge belong, had voted to support hospitalization, education, and suffrage for Negroes, with facilities and opportunities fully equal to those enjoyed by whites. They stood foursquare for an end to segregation in the church, and the committee's report told why:

> If there is an equality of all men by virtue of their relationship to an impartial Creator, and an equality of all believers who share in the redemption of Christ, such equalities must be respected in the body of Christ, which is the church. Therefore, segregation of believers holding to the same tenets of faith, because of color or social status, into racial or class churches is a denial of the New Testament affirmation of the equality of all believers at the foot of the Cross, and alien to the spirit of Christ, the head of the church.

This was unprecedented, and the final planks in the platform were just as revolutionary. The North Carolina branch of the Southern Baptist Church moved into politics to achieve Christian aims. The messengers of the church asked for the immediate passage of a federal anti-lynching bill. And in full acceptance of the logic of the times they went on to call for equal wages and equal treatment for Negro workers *and the passing of such legislation,* both state and national, as would assure fair treatment.

The teletype brought the news to North Carolina's many independent newspapers. Liberal editors were bewildered. Not one wrote a paragraph in praise of the Baptists' action. Fair Employment Practices had suddenly come out of the closet, and they didn't know what to do. A Southern editor, however enlightened his other policies, had never felt he could support the FEPC in his columns; his readers, he thought, would not stand for it. Then came this bolt out of the blue: the preachers of the Bible belt, he discovered, were ahead of him. Nor did the liberal and labor organizations mobilize support for this grass-roots moral renaissance. Though they were publicly on record for the FEPC, they had not looked hard enough at the change being wrought in the people on the farms and in the towns to be prepared for the stand taken at Asheville. Not so slow to act were those on the other side, the Baptists who had long rendered lip service to their church but in their personal, social, and political decisions had violated its spirit. Over night the convention received three thousand indignant telegrams, and the telephone circuits to Asheville were unable to cope with the number of calls for the assembled religious leaders from old familiars who opposed their action.

The onslaught was effective, and the next morning the messengers reconsidered. The session was hectic. By a vote of 253 to 158 the convention rescinded the ringing passage quoted above, which would have banned segregation within the church. And with this backtracking went a watering-down of the crucial FEPC resolution, which was changed from a demand for legislation to one for equal treatment. The demand for an anti-lynching law and for equal hospitalization, suffrage, and education withstood the attack. While the original resolution is no longer on the record, what was so eloquently said will live. All through the South the FEPC is on the lips of people who formerly dismissed any discussion of it on the ground that Southerners—particularly the churchgoing folk—would die rather than accept it.

The Baptists had already made forays against race prejudice in Virginia, Florida, and Georgia. In Florida the Ministerial Association of Greater Miami, shocked by an attempt to revive the Ku Klux Klan in the name of Protestantism, had acted with swiftness and vigor. They declared:

> As ministers of the gospel of Christ we not only oppose the position and principles of the Ku Klux Klan, but we also strongly advise our people to have no part in furthering its organization. We are not alone opposed to the Ku Klux Klan, but also to the apparent tendency on the part of many people to assume that the Klan is a Protestant organization. . . . We do not consider the Ku Klux Klan as representing Protestant Christianity in any condition or expression, since it is a denial of Christianity itself. . . . The Ku Klux Klan is the precise denial of everything truly American and democratic.

In Georgia the Reverend Joseph Rabun, pastor of the church to which the late Gene Talmadge belonged, demanded more teeth in the resolution on racial relations submitted to the messengers at the Georgia Baptist Convention. In the struggle of the old against the new the Talmadges and Bilbos find themselves fighting a growing movement within their own churches. Whipping up race hate does not serve them in fighting churchmen. Nor can they go into their accustomed routine and berate Baptists as Yankee meddlers. The argument falls on deaf ears, for the Southern Baptist Convention came into being on the issue of secession. Its tradition and record make the demagogues' claim to being the sole guardians of sectional patriotism look pallid indeed.

The old mis-leaders so familiar to the South have new antagonists, born of the changes which have slowly been

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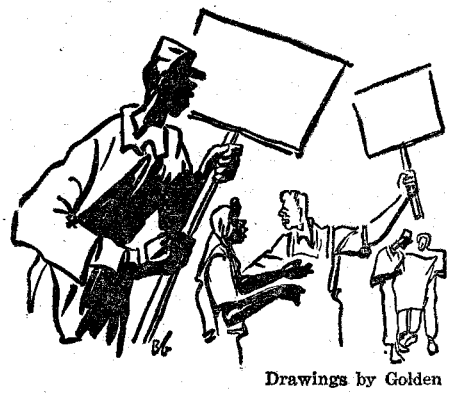
taking place in the Southern people. That these should be joined, or led, by the Baptist church is truly heartening, for no other spiritual influence is so widespread and powerful in the region. The Baptists have large and wealthy congregations in the cities; in the rolling country of the agrarian South no village is without a Baptist minister. The church has lived with the people of the city and of the farm. It has also been an integral part of the company town, where the evolution of a new attitude on race has lately been strikingly demonstrated.



Drawings by Golden

Thomasville, North Carolina, one of the many company towns that dot the Piedmont, is the domain of the Thomas Chair Company. The company has made the rules for the residents and enforced its own conception of the proper social pattern, including segregation. The Thomas plants run down one side of the main street in Thomasville; stores line the other. The railroad parallels the street, and its smoke and noise are always present. None of the beauty and quiet of the North Carolina landscape penetrates the town, nor for a long time did any sense of community responsibility.

Then came a strike. The 350 Negroes and the 954 whites employed in the plant walked out together—uncertain of where they were going, of whether they could trust each other, of what the all-powerful employer might do. In the forefront of everyone's mind those first days were two questions. The first was, if the strike lasted, how would the strikers and their families continue to eat? For the wages they had received had permitted no savings. The other could not be asked aloud; the etiquette of Southern bourbons had made it taboo. The Negro wondered how he should behave to the white man on the picket line and in the union hall. The white man was perplexed by that and a related question: what would his neighbors say if he let down the old barriers?

The answer to the economic question came speedily. The merchants supported the strikers. They gave credit to the families of the men so they could buy food, and many business and professional people contributed $10 a week to the strike fund. It was a long strike. Repeated "back-to-work" movements initiated by the employers failed. The company's greatest effort enrolled twenty-two scabs, not one of whom was a Negro.

In the long days and nights on the picket line, in union meetings, and at crude canteens the relations between Negroes and whites were clarified. Before long they marched together before the gates; soon they ate together; and after a time they sat down together and played cards. Forty-five strike leaders met constantly in the union hall to plan their course, and there were nearly as many Negroes as whites on this Steering Committee. When they had finished for the day, they had coffee and doughnuts, continuing in mixed groups their never-ending discussion of how to win the strike. It was not a recognized process of cementing race relations—that ticklish subject was never more than touched upon. The strike could not be won if the workers were divided. And everybody understood.

They understood so well that on Labor Day, when the strikers marched down the smoke-blown street, white man walked next to Negro, white woman beside black. There was no defiance of native prejudices in that parade: friends and fellow-workers marched quite unconsciously side by side. At last the day of victory came, and there was a real celebration. Outside the union hall the strikers clustered, gay now, doing little dances, congratulating each other. Upstairs there were jigs, songs—and a new union contract. This, though it said nothing of the rights of Negroes or the obligations of whites, was, in a moving sense, a charter for both.

The state's educational institutions have felt the same influence. In the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill the ferment of change has long been working. Years ago Howard Odum and Frank Graham picked up the gauntlet of progress. Dr. Odum propounded his theories of regionalism, and the national government in Washington began to translate them into political and social realities. Farm Security, the restoration of soil fertility, the TVA were logical outgrowths of the ideas which came out of the University of North Carolina.

The traditional progressivism of the university finds notable expression in the publication of the magazine *Christian Frontiers*, called by its editors a "Journal of Baptist Life and Thought." This magazine is attuned to the thinking which brought the Asheville resolution into being, to the morality which condemns as sinful the white man's sense of racial superiority. In the past few months other significant events have occurred on the campus. Dorothy Maynor the Negro soprano, sang at Graham Memorial Hall to a non-segregated audience, and white and Negro ushers escorted thousands of Carolinians to their seats. This was another manifestation of the awakened fervor of the Southern churches, for the concert was sponsored by the Council for Religion in Life and the proceeds were for the benefit of the Fellowship of Southern Churchmen.

In Raleigh, for the first time in history, a Negro student recently presided over a mixed meeting of North Carolina students. Thirty-four delegates from State Negro College and seventy-nine white students joined

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together to elect a Negro as pro-tem president of their organization.

The Southern world is definitely on the move, and in North Carolina the pace at which each segment of society is adjusting itself to the new conditions can be seen more clearly than in other Southern states. The liberal who once thought his position so daring now finds he is no longer out in front. While he kept saying, "Don't press us; what we want to do will take a long time; it's got to come slowly," the majority moved beyond him. The weakness of the gradualist position was unwittingly revealed to me by one of North Carolina's liberal editors. Relations between Negroes and white, he said, were much better now than in the time of his father, and he had no doubt that they would be wonderfully improved by the time his infant child was grown up. As he spoke it apparently dawned on him that this slow process might not appeal to persons undergoing the degrading imprisonment of segregation. After a long pause he said, "If only the Negroes will be patient."

If good liberals have been left behind, think what has happened to the bourbons. Their point of view was clearly enunciated by a textile magnate who organized the flood of telegrams and telephone calls to Asheville designed to head off the Baptist resolution. "What made the Baptist messengers pass their resolution?" I asked. The answer was prompt: "Too many red Baptists—the state is full of them!"

Italy on the Hard Road Back

BY J. ALVAREZ DEL VAYO

Rome, March 13

MY FIRST favorable impression of Italy was due in part, I am sure, to seeing the sun again after six weeks of the worst winter Europe has experienced in twenty-five years.

From the moment I crossed the frontier I was literally in close contact with the Italian people; between Milan and Florence we were jammed together like sardines in the corridor of the train. It was Saturday, and all the Milanese seemed to be off on a holiday. When we reached Florence I finally located a seat. Order on the train is assured not by railroad employees but by the people themselves: you call out the next station to a traveler who is getting off there, and as soon as he leaves you take possession of his seat. Despite the staggering crowd aboard, not a single unpleasant incident occurred; everyone helped his neighbor to make the best of the uncomfortable conditions created by the lack of rolling stock. What struck me most was the pervasive air of good humor. In Mussolini's day his admirers abroad were so impressed by the punctuality of Italian trains as to overlook the assassination of Matteotti. Today the trains no longer run on time, but they carry a population which knows how to enjoy its new, hard-won liberty.

In Rome that impression was heightened by the animated throngs out for a stroll on Sunday afternoon. The whole city seemed buoyant and alive. *Pastellerias,* like Berardo's in the Galleria, were brimming not only with customers but with delicacies that are rarely seen in Paris even in the most expensive shops. People were queued up outside a midtown movie waiting to see an old Rudolph Valentino film—American producers are not shipping their latest films to the dollar-poor countries of Europe.

The age-old problem of Italy—a population twice as large as the soil can support—is nowhere more apparent than in the capital. Despite post-war hardships, the population has grown in the past two years. Moreover, the United States, which used to admit hundreds of thousands of Italians unable to eke out an existence at home, has now practically closed its doors to this immigration. Rome is somewhat encouraged by the recent decision of the Swiss government to supplement its labor force with Italian laborers. Argentina, too, is encouraging immigration, but with a view to the aggrandizement of the present dictatorship. As might be expected, Perón has taken precautions against receiving too many anti-fascists; he has sent Father José Clemente Silva to Rome with instructions to press for a large contingent of Christian Democrats, notwithstanding the demands of the powerful Italian Confederation of Labor for an equitable selection without regard to party.

On the whole the Italians do not appear to be starving, though in Rome as elsewhere in Italy sections of the population are living very wretchedly. The shops are well stocked despite an intensive export program aimed to prevent further, catastrophic devaluation of the lira. The women are not as well dressed as in France, but the impression is of a greater number of people decently clothed and shod. However, prices are mounting steadily: according to the latest figures of the Rome Central Institute of Statistics, the cost-of-living index, based on 100 as of 1938, rose from 2,900 to 3,964 between August and December of last year. A comparison of wages and prices makes one feel that it will take little short of a miracle to keep the Italian workers going. In the textile industry, for example, piece-work wages range from 12,000 to 20,000 lire a month. But a simple meal in

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Rome costs about 300 lire. Women hat workers, who are comparatively well paid, earn about 4,000 lire a week. But in stores similar to those of New York's Fourteenth Street a pair of shoes costs 5,000 lire and a dress 25,000.

Perhaps the miracle that will carry the Italians through this difficult period lies in their own ingenuity and imagination. Large families take on all sorts of work. In the railroad stations a swarm of youngsters vie with the porters to carry your luggage. I met a government functionary who is holding down four jobs: during the day he works at the Ministry; at night he does bookkeeping for a small firm; in spare moments he translates detective stories from English to Italian; and on Sundays he helps his brother, who owns a popular restaurant.

The frugality of the Italian is well known; bread and spaghetti are the basic elements of his diet, and if a jug of wine is thrown in, so much the better. Unfortunately, however, the monthly ration of spaghetti is used up in a week, and for the rest of the month he must buy in the black market. In Italy the black market operates more democratically than in other countries. I do not deny that many unscrupulous traffickers have made fortunes; obviously the corruption that swept post-war Europe did not skip Italy. As a matter of fact, the other day I heard the Sicilian deputy, Finocchiaro Aprile, accuse the Christian Democrats in government posts of profiteering. No doubt his charges had overtones of demagogy and Sicilian separatism, but the calmness with which the man in the street accepted them indicates that a certain amount of administrative corruption is taken for granted. Still, I feel that here the black market, in addition to enriching a few selfish men, assures a minimum of food and tobacco to the majority of Italians. The trading is carried on very openly as a natural extension of regular commerce. The center of the black market in currency is the Piazza Colonna; sacrilegious wits say that St. Peter himself presides over the transactions. A story now making the rounds has it that in the days of the liberation, when the dollar was bringing 300 to 400 lire—today it sells for about 600 lire—a speculator who had bought up some dollars one morning at 375 was selling them the same evening for 420. When asked for an explanation he said, "That's the rate St. Peter has set." And indeed, right behind him stood the famous statue of the saint with four fingers outstretched.

Neither the existence of the black market nor isolated instances of bad administration justify the picture of a lazy, corrupt Italy drawn by certain reactionary papers abroad in the months since the people drove out the king and began to map progressive social legislation. On the contrary, the Italy of today is one of the most hard-working countries of Europe and is likely to make the most rapid recovery. Wherever electric current has been restored and raw materials are available, one sees feverish activity. In the factories emphasis is on the perfect craftsmanship that distinguished Italian products in former days and made the leather workers, in particular, masters in their field. The past two years have seen extensive rehabilitation of transport. Few people abroad have any idea how great was the damage inflicted on Italy. Of course they have read about the destruction of historic buildings, famous monuments, and bridges like the Ponte Santa Trinità at Florence, whose arches were one of the glories of the Old World, and about the wanton mutilation of the city of the Medicis which has dishonored the German High Command for all time. But little was written about the hundreds of other bridges and the miles of railroad and telegraph communications destroyed in central and northern Italy, a great deal which has now been repaired. Today classes are in full swing in universities that lack the barest essentials. And, incidentally, professors receive 20,000 lire a month when by pre-war standards and present livings costs they ought to be getting at least 140,000. Yet I know of several who have refused invitations from American colleges—which would have paid them far more—because they believe their duty is to help reorientate a youth poisoned by years of Fascist education.

The feeling of most Italians is that the Allies do not sufficiently appreciate their country's contribution to the general post-war recovery of Europe, and the harsh terms of the recently concluded peace treaty have created a certain bitterness, which extreme right elements have been quick to exploit. Americans may derive satisfaction from the fact that in the last "Doxa" poll, the United States was named the "friendliest nation," with Russia second, and Britain and France sharing last place. Actually, the results indicate not so much friendship for America as hostility toward Britain, which backed the House of Savoy to the bitter end, and toward France, which has stupidly alienated its neighbor by annexing two small, unimportant provinces. The truth is that Italian resentment is directed against all four of the big powers.

To begin with, Italian anti-Fascists will not soon forget how little recognition was accorded their "unknown war" against the Germans. Readers of *The Nation* may recall that beginning in the fall of 1942 the Political War Section devoted a number of articles to the epic struggle of the workers in Milan and Turin and Naples, about which so little had appeared in the American press. Yet I must confess that until I came here and heard the story from the protagonists in that struggle and read the underground press of those days, I did not fully appreciate the magnitude of the Italian Resistance. Under the leadership of the Committee for the Unity of the Italian People (C. U. P. I.), founded by Pietro Nenni, a Socialist, Ercoli (Palmiro Togliatti), a Communist, and Carlo Celli of the Justice and Liberty movement, who were later joined by leading trade-unionists, Catholics, and

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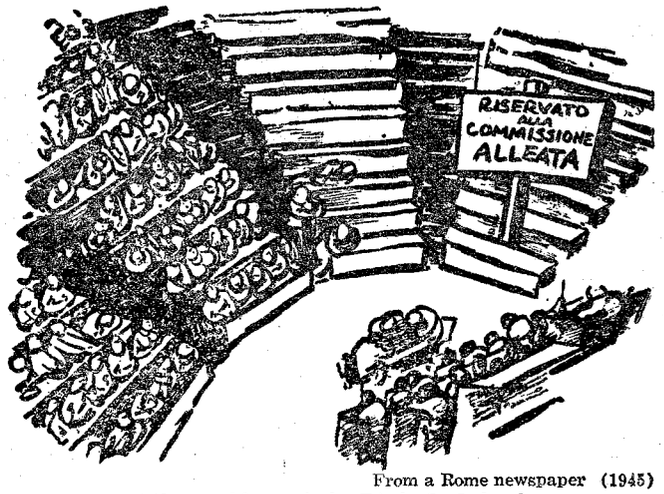
liberals, there was waged one of the most glorious people's struggles of the war. Italians fought Germans on French soil; among those who fell before Gestapo machine-guns were Marcello Bertone, coeditor of the Italian anti-Fascist paper in France, Ricardo Rohegger of Trieste, Mario Buzzi, and others. Within a year the C. U. P. I. had 8,000 experienced underground workers in Milan alone. But the movement was not restricted to the industrial cities. It spread quickly to the rural districts and enlisted the support of the peasants. In Rome the rebellious attitude of the students forced the authorities to close the university on May 9, 1942.

After the fall of Mussolini, when further organized army resistance became impossible, the masses took over the conduct of the war; under the inspiration of the partisans, the whole nation rose in arms. Though reluctant to admit the value of an "army" in which career officers shared authority with Socialists and Communists risen to the rank of colonel or general, Allied Headquarters was obliged to state in January, 1944, that "the figure of 300,000 armed Italian patriots can be taken as an understatement of the total number." None the less, the Allied Command, with the honorable exception of Britain's General Alexander, at all times maintained an aloof attitude toward men who not only saved American and British lives but were destined to be the very sinews of the new Italian Republic. On April 10, 1944, the British Admiralty issued a statement praising the behavior of Italian submarine crews, but by some mysterious legerdemain it never reached the press. Apparently Italian anti-Fascists were good enough to die, but not good enough to be encouraged to build a new Italy.

Perhaps the Resistance might have resigned itself to being classified as a third-rate auxiliary force if the Allied Military Government had not systematically opposed everything that meant Italy's orientation in a democratic, socialist direction. Those of us who have followed sympathetically the efforts of the Italian people to root out fascism are aware of this aspect of the story too. But again, I had to come here and talk with leaders of the various political parties—and I saw almost all of them —to understand fully the extent to which the Allies have sabotaged the progressive forces of Italy. Their obstructionist tactics have retarded the consolidation of Italian democracy and forced the government to abandon many projects for nationalization and new social legislation. While conciliatory in tone, former Premier Bonomi's new book, "Diario di un anno," makes it clear that the Anglo-American ideal was an Italy ruled jointly by the monarchy and the Vatican, which would counterbalance a leftist France and ultimately serve, together with Franco Spain, as a bulwark against the advance of socialism in Western Europe.

In the light of these facts, the Italians could not but regard the peace treaty as another injustice against their



From a Rome newspaper (1945)

The Problem of the Right Is Solved

nation. I have the feeling that most realistic political leaders know the treaty might have been worse, and that the study of possible revisions, already initiated at the suggestion of Britain and America, may bring about favorable modification in the near future. But certain provisions of the treaty—not necessarily the most important, but certainly the most irritating—have given reaction a new opportunity to stir up discontent. The disposition of the Italian navy is a case in point; except for two modern cruisers, it will add little strength to the Allied navies which are to share it. Italians, however, are more disturbed by the loss of the fleet than by the prospect of having to pay reparations far beyond their means; they see in this a blow to their national pride, for during the period of cobelligerency their navy performed major services for the Allies. While intelligent left leaders may be more interested in organizing a genuinely democratic government and putting the country back to work than in protesting against the injustices of the peace treaty, were they to say so openly they would probably be denounced as traitors by the right.

The left must be constantly on guard against the nationalist agitation instigated by the forces of the past. Fortunately for Italy, Mussolini's Fascists never attained the same degree of power as their counterparts in Germany, but that is no reason to dismiss Fascist activity lightly. Every three months or so a new Fascist publication is started, usually not in Rome or cities where the workers are strongly organized, but rather in Sicily, where the old landed proprietors hate the republic and fear the coming agrarian reform. The first attempt to build a Fascist underground was made in 1945 when half the peninsula was still under Allied occupation. Today the existence of a secret organization is common knowledge; in Rome I heard talk about the Mussolini Action Squads (S. A. M.) complete with codes, contact points, and meeting places, and directed by former Fascist and monarchist officers. Since the S. A. M. knows that a coup would have no chance of success now, its strategy is to infiltrate into the legal political parties as a fifth column

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in order to "control" democracy and mold it along lines as completely Christian Democratic and as little Socialist or republican as possible. The reputed leader of the Fascist revival is Carlo Scorza; his present whereabouts, like those of his German colleague Martin Bormann, are a mystery. Along with the small provincial publications, a number of thinly disguised Fascist papers are being sold openly at newsstands in Rome: *Rivolta Ideale,* edited by Giovanni Tonelli, with a circulation of about 80,000, *La Ruota* of Naples, and *Meridiano d'Italia* of Milan, with smaller audiences. On the other hand, the popular anti-clerical weekly, *Don Basilio,* has half a million readers.

Barely a year old, the Italian republic appears to be well intrenched. But the bitter struggle continues between the right and the left, between the forces working desperately to establish a neo-fascism and those that are attempting to translate the "century of the common man" into reality. The national elections, which will decide Italian policy for the next four years, are scheduled to be held in October, but already the country is engaged in full-scale campaigning. This helped me to get a clear idea of the various party programs and of the political climate in general.

[*Mr. del Vayo's next article from Italy will discuss the political position and policy of the Vatican.*]

Carrie Chapman Catt

BY MILDRED ADAMS

THE end of a great human being stops time and for a moment holds people and forces revealed in naked light. So it is with the death of Carrie Chapman Catt. Only now that the blue eyes are closed and the strong voice quiet can we begin to see the proportions of the tall leader from Iowa and the part she played in creating certain forces that help make American life what it is today. She spent sixty years in shaping two mass movements—the progress of women out of their position as a submerged class into an equality of opportunity with men, and the progress of the world in developing peaceful techniques of international change. She stands not only as a leader of women but as a political thinker of the first order.

What women all over the world owe to her is so imbedded in their daily lives that only through the illumination of a moment like this can they imagine how much more meager things might have been for them had she not lived. What the world owes is even harder to isolate and appraise, for it would include not only her own contribution but also the work done by millions of women whose energies she unleashed. One of her last acts was to join Mrs. Roosevelt and others in saluting Russian women for their efforts to build a peaceful world.

President Truman, in a telegram sent to her New Rochelle home when he heard of her death, said that with her passing "an era in our national life comes to an end." She was the last of the great leaders whose fight for woman suffrage began in the nineteenth century and followed through to the ratification of the amendment in 1920. As a young woman she traveled and spoke with the pioneer Susan B. Anthony, and though she had far more sense of humor than that indomitable veteran, she was in spirit her direct heir. Her great contribution was the concept of organizing along recognized political lines what had hitherto been a movement more remarkable for its enthusiasm than for its campaign skill. Beginning with the Assembly districts in New York City she organized women into a political party with the vote as its first aim. Not only did this new attack prove successful, first in the states and then in the nation, but it persuaded a great body of women of the need for informed opinion and skilled action and taught them how to use the vote for public good once they had won it. Her realization that wise use of the ballot is not an inherited instinct even in a democracy but a skill to which citizens must be educated is now an axiom in political thinking.

Mrs. Catt's interest in international affairs, commonly thought to have followed her work for suffrage, actually paralleled it for at least forty years. As early as 1904 she became president of the International Woman's Suffrage Alliance, and traveling about the world on its affairs, she looked at governments in action with that clear, inquiring gaze which was one of her most valuable assets. As a distinguished visitor on a public mission, she was usually accorded an interview with the country's ruler. Abroad and at home she saw government face to face, and she had few illusions about it. If her optimism was temperamental, her skepticism was informed and healthy.

When suffrage was finally won and she had founded the League of Women Voters to carry on education in the use of the ballot for the common good, she said

MILDRED ADAMS is a distinguished writer in several fields and an occasional contributor to The Nation. *She knew Mrs. Catt personally for many years.*

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with a relieved sigh that she could "now devote all attention to the cause of peace." She drew together eleven national women's organizations into a working group to study "the cause and cure of war." When another war came that group developed into the present Women's Action Committee for Victory and Lasting Peace.

Between the wars, when "peace groups" stronger in good intent than in wisdom littered the land, Mrs. Catt was one of the few peace advocates who could not properly be called either a pacifist or an isolationist. Iowa farm woman that she was, dowered with a sense of reality that never left her, she recognized growth, dispute, ambition as human manifestations that could neither be legislated nor educated out of existence. What she hoped was that techniques could be developed by which disputes between nations could be kept at a minimum and settled when they arose by compromise and agreement instead of armed conflict. Her cherished dream was that peace should be treated as a positive national good rather than as a State Department by-product, and should be made the active business of a Department of Peace set up within the executive branch at Cabinet level. That has not yet come to pass, but she felt herself fortunate to have lived to see what she regarded as the tragic national blunder of 1920 corrected when the United States entered the United Nations. Her last birthday wish was that the "United Nations would make a perfect success and that we would never have another war."

To younger people of good-will, confused by the plethora of organizations that seek to move the world this way or that, there is cause for wonder in the degree to which Mrs. Catt's influence was that of the individual making up her mind on the evidence of her own eyes. It is true that she went about the world as a feminist leader, but she did not lean on her position as the representative of groups of women. On the contrary, the groups leaned on her.

For reasons deeply rooted in her personal life and that of the nineteenth-century communities in which she spent her youth she really believed that women had better stuff in them than men, that given a chance to develop and to contribute to public life they would be a force for good. If this was an illusion it also served as an inspiration, and there is reason for examining the influence of modern pessimisms in the fact that women who worked with and for her felt the spur of that optimism and did better than they knew they could.

The rare qualities which attracted her followers from near and far to New Rochelle long after she had retired from active life still stir thousands who never saw her. She went without a last recorded word, but she would have stood by the message with which, in the dark days of 1940, she closed her speech to the Women's Centennial Congress.

"Friends," she said in that slow, direct voice which reached into listening minds like the thrust of a spade, "it is a hard future, but every problem can be solved and many of them must be solved. For your own sake, face the future cheerfully, for your friends' sake, be optimistic, for your children's sake, be confident, and for the sake of all things, be bravely unafraid."

Conscience in California

BY HENRY GEIGER

Los Angeles, March 12

ALTHOUGH the Selective Service act expires at the end of this month, twenty-two conscientious objectors are being tried in Los Angeles on charges of violating it. Cases against thirty-six others were dropped after the United States district attorney decided to limit prosecution to the alleged ringleaders. The twenty-two are being tried for going on strike to get pay for "work of national importance" which prior to last April they were forced to perform without remuneration in the Glendora, California, civilian-public-service camp. They also sought civilian control, dependency allotments, workmen's compensation, and equitable discharge rates.

The last of these demands has been granted, but the strikers will not benefit if they are now sent to a federal prison instead of going home. "Civilian control" could probably be established by Presidential order. The three remaining strike aims—bare minimums of decency in any kind of employment, military or civilian—are as far from realization as they were four years ago, when the C. O.'s petitioned the government for wages equivalent to army base pay and subsistence for their wives and children.

Thousands of the men in these camps were married; many had small children whose need for care prevented their mothers from working. Yet according to the Selective Service law they had not the right to earn money for their families even in the time left to them after a

HENRY GEIGER, a theosophist, spent three years as a conscientious objector in a civilian-public-service camp.

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fifty-one-hour work week, except as a "privilege" allowed by federal authority.

Last April about eighty conscientious objectors in Camp 76, at Glendale, having exhausted all known "democratic" avenues of appeal, stopped working for the United States Forest Service and started packing food for hungry Europeans, using contributions from friends to buy food and pay the postage. They refused to work any longer for nothing—their "allowance" of $2.50 a month, raised to $5 six months after the war began, could hardly be called "pay"—under illegal military supervision.

In explaining their protest, the men pointed to the contradiction between the theoretical recognition of the right of conscience in the United States and the government's practice of treating C. O.'s as slave laborers. "If the public judgment is that C. O.'s should be treated as criminals and slaves," they said, "then the program should be legalized by Congress. If the public believes in recognition of conscience, then the program should be changed. Either pay us and place us under civilian control or admit that you are treating conscientious objectors like felons and stop all this talk about freedom of religion. We don't have it."

Labor leaders are beginning to realize that the civilian public-service system may set a dangerous precedent for civilian labor drafts. Last month Meyer Bernstein of the C. I. O. Veterans' Committee told the President's Amnesty Board: "We sense a great danger in compulsory labor not in punishment for crime. Forced work of any kind is detrimental to democratic institutions. The arrest of C. O.'s who struck against forced labor is the compounding of an injury. We of organized labor have suffered from this sort of abuse ourselves. So we protest on our own behalf as well as in defense of the C. O.'s."

When the system was described to Senator Wallgren, now Governor Wallgren of Washington, in 1943, he said, "You are treating those fellows worse than the Japs," meaning the interned Japanese Americans. To which General Hershey responded: 'Maybe so, . . . but that is the way we have been running it for a good while."

Clarence Dykstra, first director of Selective Service, explaining the program for C. O.'s worked out by church groups to a House subcommittee on appropriations in January, 1941, said, "We do not expect to pay them anything." Representative Houston demurred, saying, "They are protected by law." Nevertheless, 12,000 men were sold into slavery for the duration. Liberal Congressmen were lulled into acceptance of the no-pay idea by assurances that the church pacifists wanted it that way. At first many C. O.'s themselves accepted the doctrine that they could prove their loyalty by the "sacrifice" of working without pay, but as years passed, they grew restless. The alternative-service program, as they saw it, consisted of trivial jobs in concentration camps ruled by military regulations, where men were denied even the elemental compensation of base pay to take care of their personal needs. Medical care was inadequate, often irresponsible.

Of course, it was an ordeal that healthy men with principles could stand. They did not oppose the system because it was unpleasant or destructive of their own morale. It was the thought of these slave labor camps as a fixture of the American scene that drove them to protest. The knew that in England conscientious objectors were allowed to find their own jobs, within limits defined by the British tribunals, and were paid prevailing wages. British C. O.'s had to face social ostracism, it is true, but this every war resister expects. Canadian C. O.'s worked in labor camps for pay, and after a year were released to fill civilian jobs vital to their home communities—as in hospitals and schools. What rankled with American conscientious objectors was the hypocrisy and waste of the American system. It squandered the energies of thousands of useful and often highly trained citizens; it pretended to uphold religious freedom but actually imposed heavy economic penalties on conscience.

During and after the war hundreds of conscientious objectors "walked out" of camp to face federal prosecution. But the strike at Glendora was the first mass action in protest against the civilian public-service system. The Friends' Service Committee has just withdrawn its aid in administering the system. The friends' camps—Glendora was one of them—were populated with articulate, socially conscious men. When their misguided friends, the church pacifists, got out, the last frayed strand of allegiance to the program snapped. The war was over. As the soldiers came back, the men in the camps found it unendurable to be held as peace-time civilian conscripts.

So though their discharges were only a few days or weeks away, these Glendora men went on strike, risking prison sentences that might extend their punishment for years. The FBI descended in force, and soon all the strikers—except a few who went back to work because of church pressure or for family reasons—were arrested and charged with criminal offenses against the Selective Service Act, for which they face a maximum penalty of five years.

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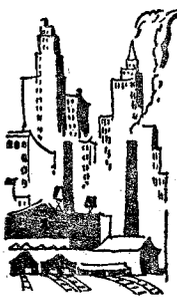

EVERYBODY'S BUSINESS

KEITH HUTCHISON

Russia and Reparations

THE attempt to extract a vast sum in reparations from Germany after World War I ended in fiasco. The comparatively small amounts that were in fact collected were transferred only through the agency of much larger American and British loans to Germany, and these loans in turn served to finance the modernization and expansion of German heavy industry and, ultimately, rearmament. Seeking to avoid such pitfalls this time, the Big Three at Potsdam agreed that reparations should be paid by the physical removal of the capital assets that constituted Germany's armament potential. Moreover, they decided that the total of industrial equipment left intact should be no more than enough to provide a modest standard of living and a volume of exports sufficient to finance the imports needed to maintain that standard.

It was a neat theory, but in practice it has not worked out very well. Dismantlement of plants has proceeded slowly in the western zones, and removals were formally halted in the American sector in May, 1946, on the ground that Russia's failure to implement the Potsdam decision to allow Germany economic unity compelled reconsideration of zonal industrial needs. Actually a trickle of equipment has been made available, but allocations have been too small and irregular to be of much assistance to nations counting on German machinery to further their industrial reconstruction. Russia, whose share of western-zone reparations was fixed at 25 per cent, has been particularly dissatisfied, and at the Moscow conference Molotov has accused America and Britain of "sabotaging" German demilitarization by failure to dismantle 1,540 out of 1,557 plants listed by the Allied Control Commission.

However, the Russians appear to be disappointed also with the gleanings from their own zone, where they have had a completely free hand. They are reported to have shipped some $1,000,000,000 worth of equipment eastward, but the operation appears to have entailed unexpectedly large losses. According to David Ginsburg, who has prepared a report on reparations for the National Planning Association, "although considerable quantities of industrial machines did arrive in usable condition, the assembly and operation of whole plants at the point of destination proved to be inordinately difficult. Missing parts and machines, damaged parts and machines, lost engineering plans, shortages of skilled manpower, delays at every stage—all bedeviled the Soviets to the point where confidence in the capital-goods reparations program as a major contribution to the success of the new Five-Year Plan was lost." As a result the Russians have greatly reduced their removals schedule and have even returned some plants to Germany. More and more they are relying on the proceeds of current production in their zone as a means of reparation, and to this end they have taken title to over 200 important industrial plants in which 300,000 to 400,000 Germans work as "Soviet state employees." From these and other sources, Mr. Ginsburg estimates, they have obtained some $500,000,000 worth of goods. However, this flow seems destined to be reduced owing to scarcity of raw materials and depreciation of machines which cannot be made good from local resources.

While the receipt of reparations has lagged behind Soviet hopes, the need of the Soviet economy for additional supplies of both capital and consumer goods has become more urgent. Even the scanty news Moscow vouchsafes about industrial development makes it clear that the Five-Year Plan has got off to a very slow start, while last year's drought has held in the fields workers wanted in the factories. It is not surprising, therefore, that the Russians hope to turn to account the idle machinery and man-power of western Germany.

Last July in Paris Molotov renewed a demand, made at Yalta but never agreed to by America and Britain, for a total of $10,000,000,000 in German reparations, including deliveries from current output. To make this possible he agreed to consider an upward revision in the level of German industry and even an increase in German steel output. This represented a complete reversal of the earlier Soviet position, which had been to cut German industrial potential, and particularly steel capacity, to the lowest possible point.

Nevertheless, this volte-face was not welcomed by the Western powers. Mr. Ginsburg, who served during 1945-46 as United States alternate on the four-power economic directorate in Berlin, makes their reasons clear in an analysis which I can reproduce only in the briefest summary. The crux of the matter is, however, that even if German industry were allowed to expand beyond the limits determined by the occupying powers, payment of reparations from current production would only be possible with the aid of outside—that is, American—loans. Under the most favorable circumstances it will be several years before Germany can export sufficient to pay for the imports of food and raw materials required to restore the German standard of living to the low 1932 level—the target fixed by the Allied Control Council. Payment of reparations at the rate of $1,000,000,000 annually—half to Russia and half to other claimants—would raise the required export total to about $2,500,000,000.

The Allied Level of Industry Plan proposes that the bulk of future German exports shall be the product of light industry—toys, china, textiles, and so forth. But markets for such goods in an impoverished world are limited; moreover, they are not the goods Russia most wants. Consequently, payment of reparations from current production would necessitate reviving German heavy industry on a much larger scale than has been contemplated. It would mean, too, that an increased proportion of the Ruhr coal output would have to be retained for German industry, thus defeating the hopes of France and other Western countries which have been counting on Ruhr coal to fuel their industrial expansions.

Even if the Moscow delegates agreed to let Germany go ahead and produce as much as possible, the chaotic state of German communications, the appalling housing situation, the shortage of labor, particularly skilled labor, and the increasing debility of the German population would combine to slow down the process of recovery. The attainment of an export surplus available for reparation payments is hardly

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even in sight. Thus the Soviet demand for German goods *now* could only be satisfied if the clause in the Potsdam agreement which gave payment for imports a prior claim on export proceeds were nullified. But since Germany must have foreign food and raw materials to produce at all, this in turn would mean a continuous flow of American credit to fill the gap. In regard both to the financing of reparations by the United States and the rebuilding of German heavy industry we would be back in the post-Versailles pitfalls.

IN ONE EAR

BY LOU FRANKEL

RADIO listeners in and around New York City have the privilege of hearing WMCA (570 on the dial), a non-network commercial station with a flair for fine public-service programs. In the two years since the atomic bomb smashed Hiroshima sundry stations and networks have broadcast talks and forums about the atom: the ABC network read the John Hersey story; every network and most stations reported the experiment at Bikini Atoll play by play; and the CBS documentary unit is preparing a program on the industrial use of atomic energy. But it remained for WMCA to grapple with the basic problems of atomic power in its dramatized series of broadcasts "One World or None." For breath-taking drive, for blunt, shocking facts, for calling a fool a fool and a lie a lie, "One World or None" is outstanding.

Under the direction of Nathan Straus, WMCA has frequently tackled local problems. Straus took over five years ago, just after New York City had been racked by a race riot in Harlem. A weekly series of dramatizations against racial intolerance based on Roi Ottley's "New World Coming" was started at that time and is now in its fourth year. When the atomic scientists began to fight for less censorship and more information for the public about the atom, WMCA saw another project taking form. The publication in March, 1946, of "One World or None," written by the scientists themselves, provided the vehicle. And just as WMCA had organized a community committee to advise it on its tolerance programs, so it now called in consultation the leading atomic scientists. Einstein, Oppenheimer, Bethe, Urey, and others served on an advisory committee.

The first broadcast of the series, on Friday evening, January 10, at 9:30, drew a mixed response. Quite possibly that first program was overdone. The strong broad strokes built to plateaus, not peaks, of tension. The climaxes tugged at the lapel instead of stopping the listener short with a blow to the "button." Perhaps it would have been smarter not to have opened with a hypothetical bombing of Manhattan, for New Yorkers are blasé about their town. Subsequent programs were presented more deftly without any loss of punch. Fine acting and scripts crammed with facts power the series; satire and fantasy are used for contrast; original music emphasizes the emotional impact.

On February 21, during the fight over the confirmation of David Lilienthal as chairman of the United States Atomic Energy Commission, the subject was "The Case of David Lilienthal." This program showed first how the military brass hats had tried to railroad through Congress a bill giving them control of the atom, how the scientists had stymied the War Department, how finally the Senate and House had passed the McMahon bill calling for civilian control, not military, for public control, not private, and for the subordination of domestic policy to any international agreements that might be signed later. Then the alignment of forces in the fight against Lilienthal was brought into the open, and the issues were made clear. As the narrator put it, "It was not David Lilienthal, it was the public-control provision of the Atomic Energy law itself that was the target." Finally, as any good public-service program must do, "The Case for David Lilienthal" spelled out action—in these words: "The drive to subvert the power of the universe to private use will go on. It must be beaten down again in the days ahead by the pressure that can always beat it down—the pressure of the people."

The writing by Dexter Masters, the direction and production by Mitchell Grayson, the narration by Paul McGrath, the music by John Gart (he has the makings of a "one world" symphony in his bridges and underlines), and the performances of the players measured up to the concept of this exceptional public-service program. And so did the results. WMCA was snowed under with letters from educators and other prominent persons asking for more information and for speakers on the subject. Several offered funds, which were refused. Radio stations requested transcriptions. Unfortunately, but understandably, the musicians' and performers' unions have approved the rebroadcast of the series only on educational stations. WMCA, grateful to the unions for permitting even so limited a number of rebroadcasts, hesitates to ask for waivers for commercial stations.

Since WMCA can hardly be expected to carry the additional cost itself—the rebroadcast fees for commercial stations approximate $750 for musicians and $72 for each actor—the program will run only its stated period. The broadcasters, the National Association, and the networks, busy lambasting the Federal Communications Commission for attempting to enforce public control of radio, are not eager to support the fight for public control of atomic energy. Local committees, however, might well finance the replaying of this series. Or organizations like the National Committee on Atomic Information in Washington might be persuaded to shoulder the burden.

This much is certain: the job needs doing. Scripts or transcription will be made available by WMCA if the cost is covered; the stations will surely be glad to air a program with such high entertainment and educational value.

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BOOKS *and the* ARTS

Psychology and Symbols

UNDER THE VOLCANO. By Malcom Lowry. Reynal and Hitchcock. $3.

THE AERODROME. By Rex Warner. J. B. Lippincott Company. $2.75.

ALTHOUGH in "The Aerodrome" Rex Warner continues his brave, intelligent attempts to exhume the novel from the grave of Proust, it is in the far more conventional of these two English novels that the sorrows of the times, as well as those of the contemporary novelist, are most powerfully reflected. Not to suggest a comparison where none is apt, but to think of the two books together is to have a fresh if dangerous respect for mere vitality in writing, and incidentally to wonder whether it was not a matter of self-preservation for Malcolm Lowry to have lived in recent years, as it appears he has, almost everywhere but in his own country. Certainly, whatever its weaknesses, "Under the Volcano" has a vigor and impact that have been missing in home-grown British fiction for some time. Large, "ambitious," and immensely sad, marred by a specific failure of vision and at times by a more irritating subjectivity of treatment, the book would compel respect if only for its more than occasional skill and for the conglomerate wealth of perceptions that has gone into it. Luckily there is also a fine central perception to keep the book from falling apart—a central character, that is—and though the author is not secure in his larger meanings and tends to overstress them, nevertheless in his story of the death of a man's will he does touch with rather anarchic brilliance on the core of the modern tragedy. This, as he has his hero reflect, is precisely to have lost the stature and capacity for tragedy—"Even the suffering you do endure is largely unnecessary. Actually spurious. It lacks the very basis you require of it for its tragic nature"—and it therefore presents a problem of sustaining interest, of simple dramatic tension, to which Lowry's medium is inadequate. But the perception remains valid.

The hero is Geoffrey Firmin, British ex-consul, now a "knight of sorry aspect" drinking himself to death in a Mexican town presumably modeled after Cuernavaca. The two great Mexican volcanoes loom literally and symbolically in the distance, and the town and the region around are traversed by an ominous ravine into which the Consul's body is thrown at the end. "Quauhnahuac was like the times in this respect, wherever you looked the abyss was waiting for you around the corner." The time span of the book is one day, the Day of the Dead, 1939, on which the Consul's divorced wife, Yvonne, rather miraculously comes back to him after a year's absence; miraculously because he has been howling for this to happen, imagining that their love could save him, though he has had too little will to be saved even to answer her letters. And of course he will not be saved now; he will even, through a symbolically used accident, destroy them both; but we are taken through all the heartbreaking detail of the process, against a background of Mexican festivity and in a somewhat overwritten but on the whole convincing atmosphere of doom. Also involved are a middle-aged French movie director named Laruelle, whose function in the pattern of the novel appears strained, and the Consul's half-brother Hugh, an unhappy young man of action whose political thinking seems too close to the author's own conscience and in any case comes close to spoiling the book, since it is interwoven with the political incidents of the Mexican scene on which the Consul's death is made finally to depend.

That the book is not spoiled by the basic and by now boring innocence embodied in Hugh is the highest tribute to Lowry's talent. Hugh is another Robert Jordan of "For Whom the Bell Tolls"; he has various doubts and incapacities analogous or complementary to his brother's, but they are shown chiefly in the murky stream of his consciousness, and at the end we have been given nothing to undermine his political view of the world as good, represented by his thoughts of the Battle of the Ebro, versus evil, or the "forces of reaction." This comforting dichotomy, so familiar among a certain variety of intellectual tourists, would be more shocking in this context if there were not a more general and literal tourist quality in the book as a whole. The fact that none of the characters have any inevitable relation to the scene in which they are placed could, if properly used, greatly have heightened the sense of alienation, of the spiritual homelessness of modern man, that is part of Lowry's theme. But it is not so used. On the contrary, he is continually suggesting correspondences between the Consul's collapse and the failures of the social structure, and since his people are really connected with no structure at all, except a very remote British Empire, the resulting atmosphere is sometimes less of doom than of the Left Bank.

A more pervasive sense of the thing's not quite coming off arises from the erratic and overloaded nature of the writing; and yet almost any page read separately would be taken to indicate an extremely expert hand. The pace of the story too is extraordinarily effective, so that the Consul's struggle and enormous downfall, to the tune of a staggering number of drinks which manage to drown neither his wit nor his agony, become almost unbearable—even though one could wish for clearer insight into the origins of his failure. But in spite of this achievement and the innumerable details of observation that beautifully support it, one arrives before long at the conclusion that prose is being asked to do here more than it can and is buckling under it. It goes weary, as in the long flashback concerning Hugh's earlier life, or flies off into such subjective rhetoric that one can no longer be sure of what is happening, as in the passage on the death, if she did die, of Yvonne. The fault would seem to be

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one not of skill but of conception, and the clue to it lies, I believe, in the startling impression this book gives now and then, not often, of having been written by a newspaperman; the question being whether the techniques of the psychological novel have not by now become so much the property of journalism on the one hand and of science on the other as to be inappropriate to such many-leveled complexity as "Under the Volcano" attempts to convey. Lowry himself has indicated the extent of the problem in his reliance on symbols, but the symbols he uses are too scattered, incomplete, and even arbitrary to carry much of the burden of his meaning.

Another possible direction has been illustrated for the last ten years by Rex Warner, who beginning with "The Wild Goose Chase" has produced a series of schematic fantasies so deft one can almost say there is nothing wrong with them. "The Aerodrome" is once more a parable, this time of the contemporary struggle of values, which he defines as between order and life. Order is represented by an imaginary Nazi-esque air force aiming at a coup d'état, and life by a quite realistic English village nearby; the characters are plausible in the ordinary way, most of the plot might have been invented by Dickens, the lesson is to the point, and the whole is so gracefully worked out as to be, if not compelling, at least readable and entertaining. To be sure the implications of the book are meant to be vast, but Rex Warner's talent is a mild satirical one, too humanitarian to be reminiscent of the early Evelyn Waugh, and with just enough trace left of Kafka's influence to remind us that the commonest legacy of Kafka as of Proust just now is likely to be anemia; which is to repeat a point in favor of Malcolm Lowry.

ELEANOR CLARK

The Poor Man's Jeremiah

AN ESSAY ON MORALS. By Philip Wylie. Rinehart and Company. $2.50.

ALL is vanity, Mr. Wylie has discovered. And as if to prove the point once and for all, as far as he is concerned, the very first paragraph of his book contains the statement that his basic concept offers "a very clear answer to every [sic] individual and collective problem." Mr. Wylie's answer to every problem runs something like this: man is an animal—that is proved conclusively in a little over fifty pages; therefore man is instinctual; but he has developed an ego for the sake of which he submerges and distorts his instincts; thus all is vanity. Q. E. D. The term "instinct" (à la Jung) being so central to this "true *science* of philosophy," it is extremely unfortunate that Mr. Wylie should have neglected to define it intelligibly. He says that instinct is everywhere man is, and that it is everywhere determining—which is on a par with the statement that man must have oxygen in order to live. Mr. Wylie's use of "instinct" is, in fact, nothing but a simple extension of his profound belief that man is an animal.

The intellectual core of "An Essay on Morals" is a kind of jazzy mysticism, the springboard of which is constructed of simple elements from psychoanalysis. But if the intellectual content can be taken lightly, Mr. Wylie's manner of expressing himself cannot be: it is too unusual among popular writers. To begin with a minor point, he has chosen to affect the style of very old essayists. This heavy pomposity, mixed with the usual commercial style and a key concept employed sloppily, produces a uniquely unreadable result. But the chief thing about Mr. Wylie's manner is that he is *critical*. His writing, to state the fact fully, is the *reductio ad absurdum* of all critical writing. The movement of his "thought" is merely from one sneer, rebuke, exposé, critical "revelation," to another; and where he can demonstrate himself knowing and superior in this way mostly determines where he moves —determines the course of his argument, that is. In this sense, Mr. Wylie's is a parody of the modern critical mind —a genuine comic relief.

"Instinct" is a perfect term for such a mind to employ, particularly in relation to the subject of morals. For then criticism can be directed at everyone—the moral for not being instinctual, the latter for not being the former. Especially, that is, if the environment is ignored. And Mr. Wylie proudly possesses a phenomenal ignorance of and contempt for the environment; he begins and ends with "instinct." We are especially impressed with his contemptuous ignorance when he arrives, briefly, at politics. It turns out that he is in favor of democracy, which means for him that what happens happens. Here we begin to understand in just what sense Mr. Wylie is the philosopher and seer of the commercial intellectual: he suits the latter because he is never concrete or political enough to mean anything except in the sphere of afterhours "belief." Almost everything he suggests can be accomplished in the mind alone, during one's leisure. Like many people today, he wants a revolution in our way of life without any political effort, especially without the struggle of classes. (He makes the fantastic statement that knowledge of the unconscious mind must be spread over the globe *before* the distribution of material goods!)

Mr. Wylie writes like a man overcome by the cosmic significance of the fact that he has run across a few rather enlightening ideas. In this circumstance, he has quite blown his top. "An Essay on Morals" is the result. His more educated readers will be startled, and perhaps confused, by so much guttural noise and seeming sense. The semi-educated —Mr. Wylie's own special audience— will love the exhibition, just as they love all intellectual vaudeville. Not least in the pleasure will be the big words they can't understand and the many vague sentences.

If the author were not so pompous, this reviewer would be moved to give him "E" for effort—after all, the book is based on a primary Freudian principle, does contain a few good insights, some well-chosen facts, and one or two decent formulations. As it is, however, this vain diatribe against foolish vanity tempts one to suggest to Mr. Wylie that he either learn a reasonable humility or return, please, to the *Saturday Evening Post* salt mines.

DAVID T. BAZELON

The Isthmus

MEXICO SOUTH. By Miguel Covarrubias. Alfred A. Knopf. $7.50.

IF YOU travel four hundred miles out from New York City, you will find yourself in Cleveland—or, at the most exotic, Bangor—but if you set out from Mexico City, you can reach the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, and that is quite another matter. Women are re-

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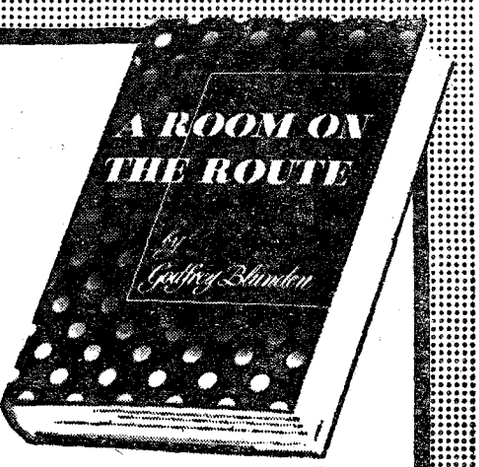
"Extremely well done . . . the cumulative effect is terrific."
—*N. Y. TIMES*



A ROOM ON THE ROUTE

A NOVEL OF MODERN RUSSIA BY
Godfrey Blunden

JOHN DOS PASSOS telegraphs—"Just finished reading A ROOM ON THE ROUTE—really first-rate writing—one of the few important novels of generations tells us a story we must understand before it is too late. Reading it I found myself back in Moscow among Russians I knew there in less terrible times. The people ring true; the city, the cold, the hardship and the terror ring true. Blunden is the only writer who has been able to make us feel in our bones the realities of Soviet life." $3.00

"A remarkable, and even exciting, novel in which everyday existence in Moscow during the war is made to seem as real as life in New York or Minneapolis . . . An important as well as a deeply moving piece of work."
—*New Yorker*

"Bound to be widely read and discussed."
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puted to be handsomer; their gowns are rich and proud; tamales are wrapped in banana leaves instead of corn husks; there are different dances, dialects of a different Indian language, and social customs of great complexity, especially having to do with celebrations.

It is significant that the Isthmus can be described in romantic and picturesque terms, by a Mexican, as if it were indeed foreign territory—significant of the isolation of important regions of Mexico and of the great variety and autonomy of indigenous cultures. Much of this will disappear in our lifetime, with the pan-American highway cutting right through Tehuantepec, and there is already a wistful note in this record of a light-hearted and self-sufficient way of life. But after all, it has been disappearing now and being re-created for at least four hundred years, and in fact this ambivalence of past and present, rooted in intense local tradition, is one of the special fascinations of Mexico. Covarrubias catches its quality very well in the parts of the book devoted to the daily life, social organization, customs, and traditions of the region: he simply tells us, in all aspects and in considerable detail, how the people of the Isthmus live, and it is a subject that one can listen to indefinitely with pleasure. The text is supplemented with abundant drawings and photographs which have the same quality of distilled observation. A tourist might never see these "typical" things, for such things emerge as not merely beautiful but characteristic only for a person who stays long enough and lives close enough to the local scene. To this sort of reporting the author brings a natural gift for entering into his material, a quality of enjoyment which gives his experience rather more validity than the clinical sociological study.

For me the almost separate treatises on pre-conquest, colonial, and republican history mar the pure and agreeable scope of the book: it is not clear why the author suddenly writes as an archaeologist or as a professional historian instead of bringing to the events and the evidences of the past the same mood of personal observation and appraisal. The armchair traveler can always skip, however, and I recommend "Mexico South" without scruple as the year's best substitute for a winter holiday—with the warning, however, that it is sure to carry you off to Tehuantepec and Juchitan and Vera Cruz in the end.

ELIZABETH WILDER

BRIEFER COMMENT

Brogan on France

BENEATH OUR RATHER MUZZY sentimentality about France ("sister republic," "Lafayette, we are here!" "Last Time I Saw Paris") there are depths of ignorance and strange currents of hostility. The Second World War would not have happened if we had attempted to understand Clemenceau instead of painting him with horns. And Potsdam might not have been such a tragic muddle if France had been present, as it had every right to be.

The American reader who wants to understand France soberly, without gushing or raving, will find no better guide than Denis Brogan's "French Personalities and Problems" (Knopf, $3). The expert who is too exclusively a specialist is under legitimate suspicion. He has a tendency to magnify his field, whether it be the Hittite Empire or Etruscan inscriptions. Brogan, our best authority on contemporary France, is also thoroughly acquainted with our country and with his own. His sympathies are not lopsided. He is a Western liberal, a citizen of that great commonwealth which came to life in the eighteenth century, and of which England, France, America are closely related provinces.

The twenty-seven essays in this book, selected from many contributions to British, French, and American periodicals, cover a wide field, historical and literary, from the French Revolution to the resurgent France of 1945. For the student of political thought the most valuable essays are those on nationalism, discussed either directly or through its exponents, Barrès, Maurras, Bainville, Daudet. We once had a friendly quarrel, Brogan and I, about nationalism. I recognize the virulence of the disease; but a raging fever need not be a permanent condition. Even in this book I might not agree with every one of his interpretations: where would liberals be, if they had to follow the same rigid line? But the facts are accurate, the reasoning is cogent, and the presentation masterly.

For Brogan, a political scientist, is a writer. So were Tocqueville, Marx, Henry George: a dull style is no sufficient evidence of profundity. He has touches of American smartness, French irony, and British humor. All this without levity: the problems are hard and the outlook is dark. In such a crisis it would be foolish to chirp, and even more foolish to mope.

ALBERT GUÉRARD

The Old Inimitable

THESE TWELVE ESSAYS ("Mainly on the Air," Knopf, $2) by Sir Max—"the incomparable"—Beerbohm are of trivial importance, if urbanity, ease, and wit are trivial. The table of contents indicates that six of the essays were delivered to the British public by word of mouth, Sunday evenings, for a quarter or half an hour, over the facilities of the British Broadcasting Corporation. This leads us to the sixty-four-dollar question: what sponsor, what forward-looking executive, of all those cited in Mr. Frankel's department in these pages, would invite American authors to come and do likewise, at the risk of interfering with Mr. Benny, Mr. Bergen, or Mr. Allen? And what good would it do him if he did? For, even were there listeners, in our shires of the republic of letters, alas, no elder statesman could be found to discourse so engagingly, and with such an absence of what Sir Max refers to as the "argute" and the "rebarbative."

ROLFE HUMPHRIES

Drama

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST" is one of those plays which read well but gain little in any merely competent performance. This particular play may, indeed, easily loose a good deal for the simple reason that it is easier to see its fantastically inhuman dramatis personae in the mind's eye than to body them forth in an even tolerably satisfactory fashion. If you play them as if they were really men and women, the effect is as disastrous as it was in those Victorian productions of Shakespeare where Hermione, or even Puck, was humanized into mere

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silliness instead of being allowed to live and breathe, to think and act, according to the arbitrary laws of her own being. One of the characters in Wilde's play, indignant at the unfairness, describes Lady Bracknell as "a monster without being a myth," and so she is within the framework of the play. But from any standpoint outside it the important fact is that she, like all her fellow-characters, is both a monster and a myth—a monster of elegant brainlessness playing her part in the mythological realm of perfect dandyism.

The most monstrous woman who was not also mythological could not possibly congratulate a prospective son-in-law upon having an occupation when he confesses that he does smoke, or could, when she discovers that he is a foundling picked up from a railway cloakroom, dismiss him with the observation that no man can be socially acceptable if his origins turn out to be a terminus. But grant her the mythological realm in which she functions—a realm of dandyism whose denizens achieve an ideal of privileged uselessness so far beyond the imagination of Thorstein Veblen that they take merely manual or practical incompetence for granted and are not really proud of anything except their arrogant refusal to use even their minds for anything except word-juggling; grant her, I say, this realm in which a sensible idea would be as gauche as sensible shoes, and she is as credible as Volpone or Ariel.

All this is by way of a preliminary to the statement that Mr. Gielgud and his company have found for their production now current at the Royal Theater a style which does help to create the mythological atmosphere instead, as is sometimes the case, of destroying it. This style is not overdone; it wisely keeps a little this side of the extravagance of the words, so that these words still come as a surprise even when uttered by the people who utter them; but it is also a style which makes each character just sufficiently assured and debonair in his manner to keep it clear that he is not human but mythological. All the parts are played extremely well, and there are at least three really superb performances—that by Mr. Gielgud himself as John Worthing, that by Margaret Rutherford as Lady Bracknell, and, best of all in my opinion, that by Pamela Brown as Gwendolen. According to the program Miss Brown in London played Goneril in Olivier's "King Lear," Lady Macbeth in another Old Vic production, and has been urged by James Agate to undertake Hedda Gabler. Of what she does for Gwendolen, that perfect embodiment of genteel assurance and maidenly ruthlessness, I can only say that Gwendolen becomes what one might imagine Lear's daughter or Macbeth's wife would be if either were translated from tragedy into comedy and thereby became what Shakespeare elsewhere describes as a very civil monster.

I note that the reviewer in *Variety* —usually very shrewd in the judgments based on its own premises—finds the play much less promising for Broadway than "Lady Windermere's Fan," and *Variety* thereby offers a poser to those of us who have always taken it for granted that the latter play was an artistically unsatisfactory mixture of wit with conventional sentiment and stale theatricality, while "Earnest" was quite perfect in its kind. The explanation is, I suppose, that for strictly popular consumption even obviously false realism is more easily acceptable than anything which openly cuts loose from all pretense of fidelity to any actuality; and though my guess is that "The Importance of Being Earnest" will sell out for the limited run which has been scheduled, it does to some extent remain caviar—which comestible I should remind those who might find the two last statements not quite compatible finds a ready sale to an adequate public. As for myself, I must confess that I have what many would no doubt regard as a quite extravagant liking for the play in question. Certainly the stream of Wilde's wit never ran so pure in any of his other works and certainly it never sparkled along so easily, so copiously, or with so much joy. The whole range of his power as a phrase-maker is exhibited, from those phrases which are barbed darts penetrating deeper than one at first realizes to those which are pure exuberant nonsense. And for once there is almost no dross, no intrusion of the alien elements of sentimentality or melodrama. Moreover, the special style of farce which he created by joining irresponsible talk to action irresponsible in some similar way is so far from being as easily imitable as one might suppose that it has seldom if ever really been imitated. To some extent, I suppose, it might be claimed that P. G. Wodehouse has been rewriting and watering it down for a generation, but Levy's "Spring Time for Henry" is the only play I can remember which comes within miles of catching its tone. Wilde did not really found a school because no one was able to learn his trick, and it is almost terrifying to remember that this triumphantly assured, irresistibly debonair work was actually enjoying its first run when its author toppled over into the pit from which he was never to emerge. He did not, like Prospero, drown his book. It was drowned with him.

Films

JAMES AGEE

I SHOULD review several of the films mentioned below at some length, and I hope that at length I will. But I have left so many films unreviewed, some of them weeks or months old by now, that I can begin to catch up only by reviewing them now, somewhere near as briefly as possible.

"The Adventuress," an English film, stars Deborah Kerr as a patriotic Irish innocent who helps Nazi spies until she learns better. It is a try at comedy melodrama and in both ways is sometimes clever. More often, the styles go thin or conflict, or lose themselves in rather unpleasant bids for general American liking. A good deal has been derived from Hitchcock, but little of the intensity and conviction which made his English films so good. There is some grace, intelligence, and fun here, but essentially this seems to me a supercilious drama, as if it had been made by bright young men who had decided to package and toss a bone to the groundlings.

"The Angel and the Bad Man," John Wayne's first production, mixes up Quakers with gun-bearing cowboys. The

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result is unpretentious, sweet-tempered, and quite likable.

"Before Him All Rome Trembled" tells the story of "La Tosca" in a sort of double exposure; the principals sing the crisis of the opera and go through a similar offstage crisis in Nazi-dominated Rome. This is all likably mediocre except for Anna Magnani of "Open City," whom I could watch for any length of time for her square-handed operatic gestures alone. She has never yet been used for anything like all she has, or promises, and I suppose never will be, now that she is coming to Hollywood, which is a pity, for both as a woman and as a movie actress she is magnificent—the nearest thing to an absolute that I have seen in films since the silent Garbo movies. Incidentally I hope that the Pope, at least, will sooner or later get around to admitting that he took no very active part in the anti-Nazi underground; judging by Italian films, practically everyone else in Italy did.

"Blaze of Noon" is a story about four flying brothers and the anxious girl one of them marries. So long as it sticks to stunt-flying and mild comedy it is pleasant enough, but the last half, during which the obsessed brothers come one by one to grief and the little woman waits it out, gets pretty monotonous.

"Boomerang!" produced by Louis de Rochemont and directed by Elia Kazan, is the story of a real-life murder and the resultant police and political work. This is still only March, but I won't be surprised if it turns out to be the best American film of its year, barring only Chaplin's. It was made in Stamford and White Plains; it is notable for Dana Andrews's best performance to date; a large cast mainly of Broadway actors, inspired perhaps by their surroundings, the non-professional actors, and the highly intelligent general intention, turns in the most immaculate set of naturalistic performances I have seen in one movie. The script and photography are exactly what they should be. "Boomerang!" never tries to get beyond the very good best that good journalistic artists can do, but on that level it is a triumph, a perfect job, and I very much hope a springboard for many more films of its kind.

"A Cage of Nightingales," a French film, reminds me of "Mädchen in Uniform" and of the fantastically original and inspired "Zero de Conduit," both of which were about the treatment and maltreatment of schoolchildren. This time the talented teacher, the healer (the comedian Noël-Noël), reforms the boys in a reform school, largely through getting them interested in choral music. Both he and the children are very charming. I like these demonstrations of what even a reasonable amount of kindliness, common sense, guile, and self-reliance can do against brute authoritarianism, and I know they are still apposite and always will be. But I would like still better to see any sufficiently intelligent attack on the new kinds of soul-destroyer—those heirs of the healers of the recent past who have learned the words ever so earnestly but, lacking the remotest ear for the tune, do their work by the book. (I'm told that one of the newer books on child-raising tells you that it's all right, indeed altogether well-advised, to smile at your baby.) They are the most deadly enemies, in our particular time, and they are still hardly even suspected, much less assaulted, except by the neolithic types they have to some extent supplanted.

I will be back at this remnants counter as soon as possible. Meanwhile I must digress briefly to say a few words about the clergy.

In the current issue of *Motion Picture Magazine* are three articles about divorce in Hollywood, signed by Monsignor Sheen, Rabbi Goldstein, and Dr. Fosdick. They say a good deal about marriage and divorce and about the relationship between the strength of a civilization and the integrity of the family, with which I agree, whether I want to or not. They also wish to require of the Hollywood stars that they serve as a good example rather than a bad one to the mere human beings who make up the stars' general audience; one even demands that the industry see to it that these employees behave themselves. In my opinion such moralists are impudent enough in horning in on what appears on the screen without assuming it is their right and duty, as well, after the stars' working hours, to get into bed with them. I would like to know, moreover, what a few people whose moral sense has reached the shaving age think of arbiters of morals who still believe in the obligation of the prominent to set a good example; who still believe in exerting pressure on them in order that they shall exert pressure on others; and who feel so profound a contempt for the souls and minds of people in general as to dare to approach them through force and through example.

I have an unsolicited apology to make. I recently referred to Cardinal Spellman in this column in a way which now seems to me to have been over-personal and otherwise vulgar. I lose no love to the Cardinal or to the clergy in general, of whatever denomination, but I am ashamed to have expressed my dislike in the way that I did.

Art

CLEMENT GREENBERG

THE Chirico revealed by his latest paintings, which are now on view at the Acquavella Galleries along with specimens of earlier work (through March 31), is surprising only as an objective fact, but not in the perspective of his whole development, which was always colored by an ambiguous and guilty but thoroughly logical hostility to all truly modern painting since Courbet.

At the beginning of his career Chirico was struck by the German Swiss painter Böcklin, whose work is one of the most consummate expressions of all that we now dislike about the latter half of the nineteenth century; however, I cannot believe there was not some perversity, half-concealed from himself, some desire to shock his peers and betters, in this admiration of Chirico's—a desire that sprang perhaps from his despair of equaling the profound matter-of-factness of the impressionists and of Cézanne and Matisse. Like many a twentieth-century Italian, with the glorious past behind him and the glorious present elsewhere—in Paris, London, Berlin—he clowned out of a historical instinct that he himself was half unconscious of.

But Chirico still was and is a gifted painter, as he demonstrated in some of the pictures he painted before 1919. Although they show portents of the bankruptcy to come and signal across a decade to that retreat of avant-garde painting which began with the surrealists in the late twenties, these canvases have a substance and plastic quality that justify, in plastic terms, this last serious attempt to save literary easel-painting. They will survive because they are *sui generis*. Though certain aspects of their design and subject matter owe much to cubism, they do not exist within the same order of criticism, and must be treated as a point of exception and not approached with the demands we make on the great and *typical* painting of the first twenty years of the century. They are one of those

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tours de force that, like Michelangelo's frescoes, founded a misguided school.

As a colorist, Chirico was in this period a last emissary of mannerism, three hundred years behind Delacroix in its use. The emphasis of his gift lies in his draftsmanship, and his best works are tinted drawings in which color does not interfere or speak in its own right. (Thus his most prominent disciples—Dali, Ernst, and Tanguy—are likewise draftsmen, but so exclusively so that they cannot handle color at all, and in their painting it gets in the way of the drawing.)

Chirico's deep space, foreshortenings, and exaggerated perspective announce, in spite of himself, the absolute flatness of Mondrian, It is the latter who drew the correct conclusion from the Italian painter's early work, not Dali. The early work parodies the perspective of the Quattrocentist masters and the means in general by which the Renaissance attained the illusion of the third dimension; and because it parodies, it destroys. From his tangential position Chirico, by an exaggeration that amounted to ridicule, helped the cubists exile deep space and volume from painting. See only how completely schematic and second-hand is his delineation of depth, how flat all surfaces in these early pictures, how the shading and modeling are applied in undifferentiated patches, like a decorative convention, and how light is handled as if in a shadow box.

Having performed this parody, which was in the nature of a final summing up and relegation of all the problems that had occupied Western painting between Giotto and Courbet, Chirico had no place left to go. Failing or unwilling to understand either what he had done or the character of painting since Manet, he could find nothing to replace that remnant of the Renaissance which he had destroyed. His destruction had been too exclusively negative—unlike the cubists, whose attack on the third dimension had of itself generated something equally positive to take its place: a new conception of pictorial space.

Chirico went on into the twenties continuing to parody, this time Davidian neo-classicism, sculpture, architecture, literature. This was the period of broken columns, toppled statues, pale horses, and whitewashed gladiators, but handled with baroque or romantic technique. The objects of the parody and the painterly means were both irrelevant. The literary effects themselves were boring, while the loose brush-stroke, the thicker paint, and the warmer colors were just so much inert machinery. His draftsmanship, now that it had abandoned the original inspiration of mannerism and nineteenth-century popular illustration, became as weak as his color. Chirico had lost touch completely. It was not even easel-painting; it was elementary interior decoration.

This was not, however, Chirico's last word. He has now performed one more parody. These very latest, post-1939 paintings of his, more or less literal pastiches of Rubens, Delacroix, Géricault, Chardin, Courbet, and the baroque still life reduced in scale and simplified, are frontal attacks on the *malerisch* or "painterly" school, to which Chirico's own Florentine temperament, with its leaning toward hard, cool colors, firm modeling, and clear contours, seemed so directly opposed at the beginning of his career. Here, nevertheless, he has aped the heated, swirling effects of the baroque and romantic masters. The results that in their hands took days or weeks to be achieved are simulated and mocked in a few hours of slapdash, *alla prima* painting (though it should not be overlooked that baroque and romantic painting was fast and broad by definition). All that is added to the originals is a curious detachment and nostalgia toward the subject matter, an emotion that is the only overt testimony to the fact that these pictures were painted in the twentieth century.

Chirico admires Delacroix, Rubens, Courbet, *et al.;* he could not have imitated them so successfully—up to a point—did he not. He seems to be saying: this is the finest fruit of the painting of the *old* past, and now it is all over with; here is an anthology of ironic reminiscences—in any case, the end, the finish, the funeral; and as for myself, all I can do is comment on other painters.

These pictures are of no importance whatsoever in the development of painting. They are not even tours de force; they are just stunts. But this does not prevent a few of them—"The Folly of Horses," "Departure," and the Chardinesque "Still Life"—from coming off on their own terms and so revealing Chirico's gift for unity again after a lapse of twenty-five years, during which nothing he did came off, on its own or any other terms. And negligible as this stuff is at its best and symptomatic as it may be of a real degeneration and of an impotence to react cogently to modern life, still it has some reality as a gloss on the history of painting, an illustrated lecture on the ABC's of baroque painting. Irrelevant as painting inside painting, it is sheer cultural evidence, a kind of funeral oration more affecting than anything that could be put into words.

Records

B. H. HAGGIN

THERE are works which music-lovers don't get to know because conductors don't get to perform them. On the other hand Handel's "Messiah" has been given year after year by the Oratorio Society; and year after year I have neglected to go and hear it—even after hearing the Beecham recording of it a number of years ago and discovering that it was a beautiful work. Apparently I needed the additional years to be able to realize—listening now to the new recording issued by Columbia (Set 666; $22.50)—how wonderfully beautiful and moving it is.

Beautiful too is the singing of Isobel Baillie, Gladys Ripley, James Johnston, Norman Walker, and the Huddersfield Choral Society, the playing of the Liverpool Philharmonic; and they are coordinated by Malcolm Sargent in a performance which gives evidence of careful preparation in its balance of sonorities and clarity of texture, its precision and finish, and of musical understanding in its effective pacing and shaping of the work. I have not been able to compare it with the old Beecham performance, which I can only suspect would turn out to be sharper in phraseological inflection and contour; but considered by itself Sargent's is wholly satisfying; and it includes sections of the work that Beecham omitted.

And sheer delight to the ear is the recorded sound of the performance. It is a product of English competence and English conscientiousness (the accompanying booklet—and what a pleasure it is to have a booklet with the text in one's hands instead of a bulky album! —refers to many hours of experiment and rehearsal in preparation for the final recording) which are employed in the achievement of an English style—the style exemplified by the English Columbia recordings of the Beecham-London Philharmonic performances of Mozart. That style attempts not a closer and closer approximation to the real sound of an orchestra in a hall, but perfection of what the ear has become accustomed to accepting from a phonograph in a room as standing for the real

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thing, in the way that the eye accepts the photograph as standing for the real object. It gives us not the astonishing depth in space of some Victor recordings and the new London Deccas, but a more compact assemblage of sounds clearly defined in live quiet; and perfection in this style means the balance and clarity of individual sounds, the warmth and luster of their composite sonority, that are to be heard in the recording of "The Messiah."

It means, that is, everything that is not to be heard in most of American Columbia's orchestral recordings, and in particular in its recording (Set 664; $4) of a performance of a suite from Khatchaturian's ballet "Gayne" by the New York Philharmonic under Efrem Kurtz. The suite offers a number of dances and other short pieces which use engaging Armenian themes in the way that is suited to their character, not in the unsuitable ways of Khatchaturian's symphonic works; and the performance seems good.

On a single record (71929-D; $1) are good performances of the Waltz and Polonaise from Tchaikovsky's "Eugen Onegin" by Sargent and the Halle Orchestra, which come off the record with not enough treble to balance the heavy bass.

In the months since I wrote about the first new machines I have managed to hear in addition only the expensive London Gramophones. They gave very fine reproduction of records, and indeed the only good reproduction I have heard of the new London Decca records —but whether fine enough for their high prices I cannot say, since I haven't yet been able to hear other machines in their quality and price ranges. One important fact about the London Gramophones is this: the frequency-range claimed for them—as for the London Decca recordings—is out to 14,000 cycles; and while there is reason to question whether it really goes out that far there is no need of settling the question; for the machines give harsh reproduction with their full range, and the fine reproduction I have mentioned only when the treble-control is set at one step down, which reduces the frequency range, making 8,000 cycles (so the London Gramophone engineer told me) the cut-off point at which the frequency-response begins to fall away. And 8,500 cycles, I am reliably informed, is the similar cut-off point of the Victor recordings.

14,000 cycles, then, is what one may hear—extremely attenuated, be it noted —in the concert-hall; 8,500 cycles—recorded with proper microphone-placement and reproduced without distortion —is as much as one wants out of a phonograph in a room. Microphone-placement to catch the proper amount of reflected sound for richness and liveness is more important than extended frequency-range in recording: it is what causes some old English Columbia recordings that don't go beyond 6,000 cycles—like those of Prokofiev's Violin Concerto No. 1 and Mozart's "Linz" Symphony—to sound so beautiful today. And a sufficiently large speaker-cabinet for spaciousness and clean definition in the sound is more important than extended frequency-range in reproduction of the recording.

Letters to the Editors

There Isn't Any Business

Dear Sirs: Reading Simon Lesser's article What Will Your Dollar Buy in 1947? in your issue of January 18, I found myself taking immediate exception to his concept of business acting as an entity. There just isn't any such animal as "business"—presidents, publicists, and protagonists to the contrary notwithstanding. The business of the country is carried on by thousands of individual enterprises of all sizes and of all degrees of efficiency. Each enterprise has its own employees, management, owners, and customers, its own history and policies, and its own will to survive in a competitive world.

In his pursuit of enduring success the enterpriser has no function more important than pricing his product, for its price is the ultimate measure of his strength or weakness in the competitive struggle. In setting his price the individual enterpriser must weigh a host of factors, tangible and intangible. First comes a complex of costs incurred in getting the product on the market; and in times like the present these costs are in turbulent flux. Beyond covering costs, the price of the article is compounded of a "past," which buyers cherish; a present, which multifarious competitors attack; a future, which involves replacement of capital, contingencies, taxes, and profits. At all times the price level is the consensus of opinion of thousands of enterprisers and is in no sense a conscious reaction of "business" as a whole. Like any consensus of opinion, the price level reflects fallible human judgments, fears, and hopes; it is an attempt to gauge the future by men not gifted with second sight but facing the need to bet their own money on their own judgment.

In the boom of 1919-29 the United States Steel Corporation, dominant in its industry, undertook to maintain stable prices as those of competitors soared. The corporation obtained a volume of business which enabled it to operate for a time at a high rate while its competitors' business was slipping. But the time came when Steel's "stable prices" were forced to yield to the retreating price tide. During the same period our own company followed a policy of limited profit. When demand was insatiable, price was a minor consideration; when demand all but vanished, price became paramount. Such good-will—if any—as we had built up evaporated in the intense heat of the struggle for mere survival. Another "noble experiment," if you will, resulted only in the sacrifice of profit which could have been used later to great advantage.

In the sellers' market which has followed the war, and particularly since ceilings were lifted, the individual enterpriser has generally enjoyed an unusual degree of freedom in pricing. Activated by his quite normal purpose and obligation of securing the maximum advantage for his organization—employees, management, and owners—the enterpriser has sought to get the best available price for his product. To expect him to limit his take, so-called, is to ignore the motivating force of our competitive economy. As well expect a bridge player to toss in a "power house."

For most enterprisers the collapse of the towering price structure of 1920 is a living fact, not history. They want no part of a repetition in which profits and reserves will disappear. But each enterpriser in the interest of his own organization must get the best possible price for his product. Experienced enterprisers know that the direction of prices will change, perhaps suddenly; and many will manage their affairs with prudence against that day, thus benefiting, each in a small way, the entire system. But we must bear in mind that it will be the individual enterpriser, acting in his own interest, not "business," mixing prices, wages, and profits to suit its mood.

To live dangerously is the credo of the mountebank, not of the enterpriser. The latter's duty is to meet successfully the vast tides of economic forces and human emotions which swirl through the market and which find ultimate ex-

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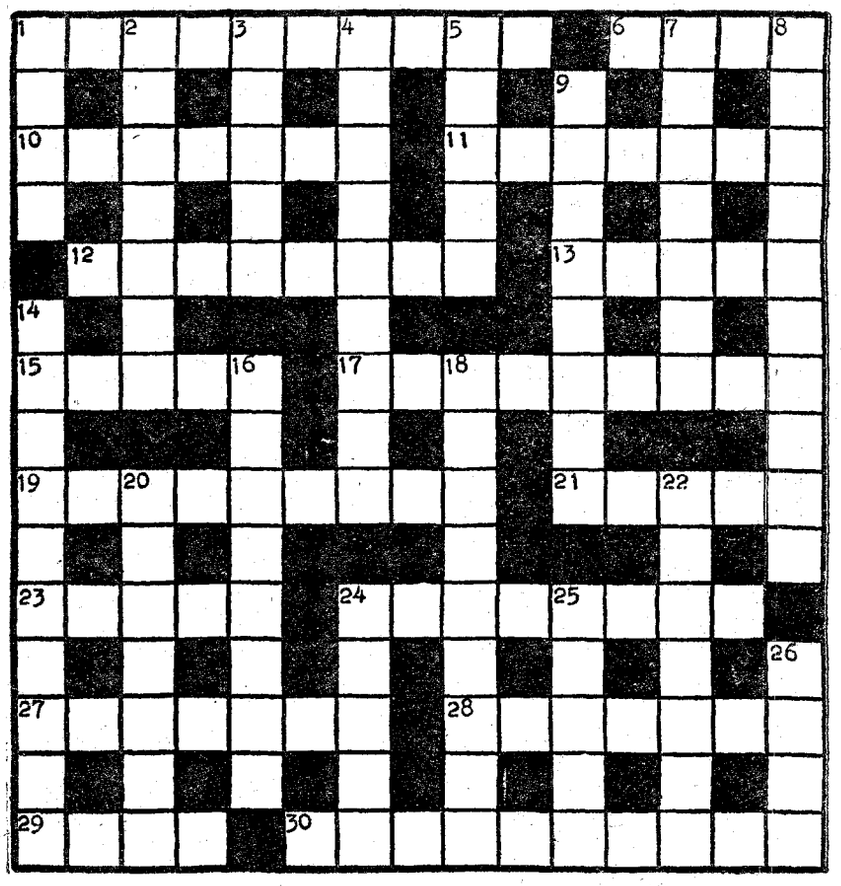
Crossword Puzzle No. 204

By JACK BARRETT



ACROSS

1 Thus Indian may be—in fact it is!
6 Beards, not trimmed but sawn
10 Nice tan (anag.)
11 Multiplied by itself
12 "Slow but sure" might be their motto
13 Exeunt
15 "Then a soldier, Full of strange ----- and bearded like the pard"
17 Describes a simpleton, but not the sort that is likely to get done brown (4-5)
19 "A man of the Pharisees"
21 Praise
23 Popular name for unpopular insects
24 Passionate
27 In for a lot
28 Body cavity containing air (3 & 4)
29 The chair in which to take it
30 He works on the railroad, but not during his dinner hour

DOWN

1 Racial anger
2 Small adornment edged with net
3 Set on its bottom, as a cask (2-3)
4 Up this Hill Piscator stretched his legs to overtake Viator
5 When blown these organs sound more like trumpets
7 English earl (1428-1471) known as "The king maker"
8 On which a lady sits on a steed (4-6)
9 Radio-controlled airplane in a swarm (5 & 3)
14 Early English furniture, but not that of the Angles (5 & 5)
16 Oblique offshoot
18 Does not mean fall in love (4 & 5)
20 Chirping insects
22 A place for tanning (where it doesn't hurt)
24 Watch, yet just miss seeing a great poet
25 Completes the fable
26 Not a distinct aspersion

□—□—□—□

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE No. 203

ACROSS: 1 SPRIG; 6 REACH; 9 ULULATE; 10 FLOSS; 11 DIVAN; 12 HOT CAKE; 16 SHAPER; 19 NYANZA; 22 ORDERLIES; 23 KNEW; 24 IDEA; 25 WIND; 26 LEAN; 27 ARNO; 29 IRAN; 30 WINDBLOWN; 33 BARSAC; 35 YIELDS; 38 TEAROSE; 41 CIDER; 42 LOCUM; 43 ICE COLD; 44 SERAC; 45 SLAMS.

DOWN:—1 SIFTS; 3 RHODA; 3 GUSHER; 4 PUNT; 5 HAHA; 6 RED-EYE; 7 ALVIN; 8 HENNA; 13 ORDINANCE; 14 CURE; 15 KNIFEBOYS; 17 HONORIA; 18 POWWOWS; 20 ASININE; 21 ZEELAND; 28 EBOR; 31 IATRIC; 32 WIELDS; 33 BUCKS; 34 RIDER; 36 LUCIA; 37 SAMOS; 39 AGES; 40 OBOL.

pression in price. No doctrinaire, the enterpriser does not know the course the tides will take. If with a prudence which is not akin to panicky fear he gauges their force and keeps sailing, he does the job he has chosen.

HENRY S. DENNISON

Framingham, Mass., March 4

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